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4.6cr Bottles And Counting: City Makes Merry This Dec

Records 14% Jump Over Last Dec, Surge Likely On New Year

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New Delhi: Delhiites gulped down nearly 4.6 crore liquor bottles in the month of December, registering a 14% growth in month-on-month sales in comparison to 2022.

While 3,99,60,509 liquor bottles were sold in December 2022 through a network of 520 shops spread across the city, 4,56,00,135 had been sold till 29 this month from 635 vends. With two more days to go, officials said the number is likely to go up considering the sale jumps significantly on the New Year's eve.

According to the excise department officials, the sale of liquor in the capital has been steadily going up this year with more shops opening in different parts of the city, increase in the availability of brands and improved customer experience.

As per the sale data, 19,42,717 bottles were sold on December 24 this year, which was highest for the month on a single day. On December 24 last year, 14,69,357 bottles were sold. December 31 last year, however, witnessed a record sale of 20,30,664 bottles, which was the highest in a day in that month. The officials added that



the liquor consumed in 960-odd bars in hotels, clubs and restaurants was additional and the data was still being compiled.

According to the officials, the excise department has also intensified enforcement activities to check illegal sale of liquor during the festival season. They added that 1,700

litres of non-duty paid liquor, meant for sale in other states or procured through duty-free shops, but been sold at various bars and restaurants, had been seized by the excise intelligence bureau.

"The excise department has been regularly carrying out inspections of licensed and unlicensed premises to

check violations and transportation of illicit liquor into Delhi. During the past week around Christmas and the run-up to the New Year, we intensified activities and raided 20 licensed premises to curb the violations," said an official.

"The major violations found during the inspections of restaurants include more seat covers than the permissible limit, serving liquor in open areas, serving liquor to underage persons and keeping the premises open beyond the permissible time of 1am."

Officials said patrolling of areas near the state borders had been intensified and 10 teams deputed to check transportation of illicit liquor.

To facilitate unlicensed premises to serve liquor during the New Year parties, the excise department has issued more than 300 temporary licences, officials said.

Following several complaints of serving of liquor at banquet halls, farmhouses and halls at events and parties without obtaining the mandatory temporary licence, the excise department had recently issued a circular asking the operators of all such premises to register with them in advance.

Year-end bonanza: 3 of 6 district court complexes to get 255 rooms

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New Delhi: At the end of 2023, the city's judicial infrastructure received a boost, with a decision taken by Delhi government to construct 255 courtrooms in three of the six district court complexes.

The Supreme Court, in an order last week, directed the city's chief secretary to float tenders and start construction of these additional courtrooms, laying down a rough timeline for the projects to kickstart after the government approved the long-pending projects.

SC had earlier said there was "no reason for the Delhi government to keep proposals pending for such an inordinate long period of time. The consequence of this is that there is an acute shortage of courtrooms. In addition, with new recruits coming into the service in the foreseeable future, there will be a further deficiency and a serious dearth of judicial infrastructure".

In its latest order, a bench of Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and Justices J.B. Pardiwala and Manoj Misra recorded the chief secretary's assurance that the 255 courtrooms, spread across Karkardooma, Rohini and Rouse Avenue, will start getting built from March next year onwards while tenders will be floated next month itself.



INFRA BOOST: The Rouse Avenue court complex is one of the beneficiaries

A timeline was charted following a meeting chaired by acting Delhi HC Chief Justice Manmohan with the chief secretary, principal secretary (law), principal secretary (PWD), secretary (finance) and other senior officers of Delhi government and L&DO. The meeting, held on the instructions of the SC, was also attended by Justice Rajiv Shakdher and the HC Registrar General.

The Delhi government assured the judges that all issues with respect to Shastri Park and Karkardooma — where 48 and 50 courts are to be built, respectively — will be sorted out so that tenders are floated not later than January 26 and work is awarded by mid-March. The expected date

of completion is 18 months from the date of award of work. A similar assurance was given for projects at Rohini, where 102 courts will be built in 21 months.

For Rouse Avenue, the Delhi government submitted that a two-acre plot was partly under CPWD's unauthorised occupation and a political party, but a part of it was vacant and can be utilised for the construction of 55 courtrooms. Vacant land will be handed over to the Delhi government and work will begin by mid-March. The buildings are expected to be handed over to the court administration within 18 months from the date of award of work. Another key project relates to 10 acres of land in Tik-

ri Khurd, where a centralised record room and digitisation centre catering to all district courts of the city is planned to be built. The government assured the court that work will begin mid-March and be completed within six months.

Binding it down to these assurances, the SC directed the government to file an affidavit by January 31, 2024, "certifying that tenders have been floated for the construction of judicial infrastructure" within the timelines specified.

It also asked the Delhi HC Chief Justice to take stock of progress on January 12 in a meeting with the chief secretary and other stakeholders. The SC also flagged the process for recruitment of staff at the district level and provision of additional courtrooms on a temporary basis for the Delhi government.

The high court had earlier told the SC that plans had been approved for three of the four projects — District Centre, Shastri Park; Karkardooma Complex; and Sector 26 Rohini — in 2021 while for the Rouse Avenue establishments, plans were approved in 2019 but approval for grant of funds was awaited. It had highlighted a shortage of 188 courtrooms in relation to the sanctioned strength and of 114 courtrooms in relation to the working strength.

29 principals' posts vacant for years get revival nod from LG

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Lieutenant governor VK Saxena approved the revival of 29 posts of principals or deputy education officers in the directorate of education on Saturday, which had fallen vacant between 2019 and 2021 in the state-run schools.

Officials added that Saxena also accepted the recommendation to the abolition of six such posts, which fell vacant between 2013 and 2017 and had been categorised in the 'immediately abolish' category.

"The steps were taken following the recommendation of finance and administrative reforms departments of Delhi government after they conducted the necessary assessment," said a Raj Niwas official.

Of 29 posts restored, two had fallen vacant in 2019, 25 in 2020 and another two were vacant by April 2021. Of the six abolished posts, three were lying vacant since 2013-14, two from 2014-15 and one since 2016-17.

The directorate of education had in April this year obtained the approval of the LG to restore 126 vacant posts and creation of 244 new positions of principals and deputy education officers to fill 370 positions

through promotion after the administrative reforms department gave a favourable report.

"While the aforesaid proposal was still being implemented, more posts fell in the 'deemed abolished' category. Submitting the proposal for their restoration, the directorate of education mentioned that filling them up was essential for the smooth functioning of various schools where the work was being temporarily managed by vice-principals," said an official.

A Delhi government official said the fact that so many posts were lying vacant was because of the negligence of successive lieutenant governors since the services matters are being controlled by the central government through them for the last eight years.

"We commend the ongoing efforts by Delhi's current LG in tackling long-standing issues pertaining to the city's services. All recruitment, transfers, postings and appointments have been under their control. It's very clear that the current central government has taken power but has not done anything to actually improve the working efficiency of these departments," the official said.

25
POSTS WERE
VACANT
SINCE 2020

Govt releases ₹150cr for construction of two RRTS corridors

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Delhi government has finally released Rs 150 crore as first instalment of its contribution in the construction of two proposed corridors of the rapid rail transit system. While Rs 100 crore is for Delhi-Shahjahanpur-Nemrana-Behror line, the remaining amount will be spent on the Delhi-Panipat corridor.

Officials said the Supreme Court had earlier rapped the Delhi government following which the transport department sought a provision of Rs 495 crore in the revised budget estimates to pay for RRTS. With no demand from the department this year, the finance department of the Delhi government had not made any allocation in the budget estimates for 2023-24 for the Delhi-Meerut corridor, which is under construction, and the proposed lines of Delhi-Panipat and Delhi-SNB.

The government had paid Rs 500 crore in May and Rs 495 crore earlier this month from the environment compensation charge, which is collected from goods vehicles entering the capital, for the Delhi-Meerut section.

As per the details submitted by National Capital Region Transport Corporation, the Delhi government's share for the two proposed corridors stands at Rs 5,704 crore, which



PICKING UP SPEED: Delhi govt has paid ₹1,260 crore for the Delhi-Meerut corridor so far

will have to be paid in six years in pre-decided annual instalments till 2028-29.

In 2024-25, Delhi will have to pay Rs 800 crore for Delhi-SNB and Rs 100 crore for Delhi-Panipat line. It has already paid Rs 1,260 crore, including Rs 80 crore as additional GST due to revision in tax rates from 12 to 18%, for the under-construction Delhi-Meerut corridor so far.

"Now that we know we have to pay a specific amount for RRTS lines every year, we will make the necessary allocation from the 2024-25 budget onwards," said an official.

Delhi will have to pay Rs 1,050 crore in 2025-26, Rs 1,300 crore in 2026-27, Rs 1,304 crore in 2027-28 and Rs 1,000 crore in 2028-29 financial years.

The overall cost of the three rapid rail corridors has been estimated at over Rs 91,000 crore, with the Centre and the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan also contributing to the project.



Government of Haryana

Excise and Taxation Department, Haryana

Launch of

'One Time Settlement' Scheme, 2023

by

Sh. Manohar Lal

Chief Minister, Haryana

August Presence

Sh. Dushyant Chautala

Deputy Chief Minister, Haryana

December 31, 2023 | 10:00 AM

Auditorium, Apparel House, Sector-44, Gurugram

Excise and Taxation Department, Haryana

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NEWSMAKERS

Naresh Kumar
After making news in 2022 with his report on Delhi's now-withdrawn excise policy, Naresh Kumar's retirement was the topic of speculation in 2023.
The state government, even CM Arvind Kejriwal, alleged serious corruption against the 1988-batch IAS officer and demanded his removal just before his superannuation on November 30. Instead, Kumar managed a six-month extension

Atishi
The AAP leader for whom 2023 proved the luckiest was Atishi. Manish Sisodia's resignation paved the way for the first time MLA from Kalkaji to take up major responsibilities in the AAP government and she currently holds 13 important portfolios, including education, power, PWD, finance, and, crucially, water

Manish Sisodia
Almost the de facto CM with 18 departments under him, the then deputy CM's arrest in the excise policy case in February shocked his party. Credited by AAP for changing the face of the city's government school system, Sisodia was broken when the only response of the courts to his bail appeals was a few hours with his family before Diwali

Vijay Goel
Former Union minister Vijay Goel was up against street dogs throughout the year. In his meetings with RWAs, Animal Welfare Board of India, animal husbandry ministry and the municipal bodies, Goel called for more sterilisation centres and adoption of the canines. He ruffled some furs and his seminar in May was disturbed by animal activists

Arvinder Singh Lovely
Perhaps his re-emergence in Congress has to do with his relations with other political rivals. A key figure in Sheila Dikshit's three consecutive governments, Arvinder Singh Lovely was given charge of the party's Delhi unit in August. While reviving Congress' fortune in the city is a daunting task, Lovely's cordial relations with politicians could facilitate alliance talks with AAP

Delhi Fails To Put Best Foot Forward

The City Saw Some Infra Leap, But A Bitter Battle Between AAP Govt And LG Over Control Of Administration Was A Huge Handicap

Hiccups in new policy
In mid-2022, allegations of irregularities in the implementation of the new excise policy sparked a political battle. The issue dominated the political discourse in the capital for most of 2023. The arrest of former deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia in February set the tone for a volatile year. Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, too, was arrested in October even as CM Arvind Kejriwal twice ignored summons from ED, branding them "illegal and politically motivated". The now-withdrawn liquor policy is likely to remain a significant political issue in 2024, the year of general elections. While BJP calls for AAP government's resignation for its alleged involvement in the "scam," AAP vehemently denies the charges. The party fears that central agencies may also arrest Kejriwal in the "fake" case to, as a senior leader put it, stop AAP's "long strides towards becoming the first choice of the electorate".

MCD: United they fall
The first election to the city's unified municipal corporation was held last year, but it was followed by a high-voltage drama between AAP and BJP, pushing even the election of the mayor to early this year. Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) is, however, yet to get a standing committee, its most powerful body. Serious fights broke out between AAP and BJP councillors during the election of its six members on February 24, and the House meeting went on for the whole night for the first time in MCD's history. Although the poll result has been announced following Delhi High Court's intervention, the rest of the 18 members could not be chosen after AAP moved Supreme Court against the appointment of 10 aldermen by the LG. The committee controls MCD's finances and no major proposal can be implemented without its approval. The mayor can only grant anticipatory approvals. At least 58 major proposals, including hiring a concessionaire for bioming of 50 lakh tonne waste at Okhla and Ghazipur landfills, are awaiting the committee's nod.

GOVT VS OFFICERS HALTS CITY
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What began as occasional trading of charges in 2022 turned into a full-blown battle between the elected dispensation and the city's bureaucracy in 2023. There were countless instances this year when bureaucrats — sometimes taking shelter behind anonymity and through press conferences on a couple of occasions — openly accused AAP ministers of threatening, lying and playing politics. The elected dispensation, in turn, made several allegations against top bureaucrats of corruption, insubordination, dereliction of duty and intentionally halting projects by denying funds and demanding their removal. The ministers claimed there had been several instances when the officers "ignored" their directions or raised "unnecessary" queries on files. Some of these issues were also taken up by the petitions committee and the privileges committees of the Delhi Assembly, which issued stern instructions. The relationship between the two important arms of the polity further soured in May when the Centre came out with an ordinance overturning the Supreme Court's order issued eight days earlier, giving the Delhi government complete administrative control over all service matters, except those related to land, police and public order. The order was soon ratified by Parliament in the form of the Government of NCT of Delhi Amendment Act, which gave more powers to LG to bolster the Centre's control over administrative matters in the capital. AAP ministers often pointed out that the new Act took away whatever little powers the elected government had, and the officers too started ignoring their directions. The past year saw at least two press conferences addressed by top bureaucrats — once when parts of Delhi were inundated due to floods in the Yamuna and, again, when the elected dispensation accused the chief secretary of corruption.

When art attack reached its summit
Siddhanta Mishra@timesgroup.com
The G20 Summit in September and the various related conferences and events prior to this gave the capital an apt opportunity to beautify itself. And the authorities chose to complement horticultural and street infrastructure with public art. With the international conference in mind, of course, the authorities focused on areas likely to be in the public eye during the G20 Summit, starting right at the airport road, where the road leading to the city had statues of lions and elephants installed. The traffic islands and other spaces were also adorned with sculptures of Shiva, the Konark Sun Temple wheel and an apsara, besides sculpted stone fountains. Murals on flyover walls and on the walls of underpasses showcased iconic Indian elements, such as Taj Mahal, Lotus Temple, Red Fort and yoga poses. Public art in the form of wall art and steel installations beautified the Pragati Maidan tunnel. However, some artwork, like the giant stainless steel wings on Mathura Road between Gate 6 and 7 of Bharat Mandapam, haven't garnered as much attention of the public as hoped for. It was mainly New Delhi Municipal Council and Public Works Department that were involved in the beautification of the city. But the two agencies were up against the old Indian trait of despoiling public art. While NDMC hired a private company to look after the sculptures, fountains and horticultural installations, PWD had to deploy armed guards to ensure preservation of the public art in the Pragati Maidan tunnel. Despite the protection, soon after the conclusion of the summit, there were thefts of parts of the new fountains and electrical items on the roads. Around 109 fountains were erected during the beautification, and based on these experiments with public art, the civic authorities plan to carry out similar adornments in residential areas such as Dwarka.

Where beauty takes the edge off bitter debates
Siddhanta Mishra@timesgroup.com
In 2023, the city celebrated the inauguration of two iconic structures — Bharat Mandapam in Pragati Maidan and Yashobhoomi in Dwarka — that marked an amalgamation of the rich Indian culture and its architectural skills along with modern amenities to host world-class events. The first such event at Bharat Mandapam was the G20 Leaders' Summit in September, while the Yashobhoomi opened its doors as the country's largest convention and exhibition centre in the same month. Spread over 123 acres and built at a cost of Rs 2,700 crore, Bharat Mandapam has been meticulously designed to serve as a venue for large-scale international exhibitions, trade expos, conventions, conferences and prestigious assemblies. Its impressive multipurpose hall and plenary hall together can host up to 7,000 participants, with various types of chandeliers and unique canvas paintings adding to the beauty of the entire complex. The beautiful amphitheatre, with a seating capacity of 3,000, enhances its grandeur and versatility along with a 27-foot Natraj statue at the entrance. The light show outside the exhibition centre has turned out to be a major attraction since its inauguration. The first phase of the Yashobhoomi has two exhibition halls, a convention centre with a capacity of 11,000, and an underground parking for over 3,000 cars. The exhibition halls, measuring around 32,000x28,000 square metre, can be converted into eight smaller halls. The main auditorium has automated retractable seating with a capacity of 6,000. For VIP events, a bullet-proof area has been created near the auditorium. In Phase II, a multipurpose arena, three halls, eight hotels, nine grade-A offices, three retail spaces and one service apartment have been planned. Located around 10km from IGI Airport, the complex, being built over 221 acres, is also connected to Urban Extension Road and Dwarka Expressway.

Jan-March AAP gov't accuses officers of sending file related to appointment of 10 aldermen to MCD directly to LG; ministers accuse officers of blocking flagship schemes

May-June SC gives administrative control over services department to Delhi gov't. Battle rages over special vigilance secretary YVVJ Rajasekhar

June-July Arvind Kejriwal alleges NCCSA "reduced to a farce"; vigilance notices to seven PWD engineers for irregularities in renovation of CM's residence

Aug GNCTD Act notified. Gov't claims several new projects affected due to sudden dismissal of "specialists" by services department

Sept Speaker RN Goel alleges finance department withheld proposal for his visit to attend Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Ghana

Oct Transport minister Kailash Gahlot alleges obstacles being created by officers in engaging bus marshals in city buses

Nov Arvind Kejriwal recommends suspension of divisional commissioner Ashwani Kumar to NCCSA for shutting down smog tower in CP

Dec Saurabh Bharadwaj writes to LG, demands chief secretary's suspension for "leaking" ATR report on sexual harassment in Burari hospital case

Passing through Ashram now a breeze

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The inauguration of two flyovers this year has made the commute to and from Ashram, one of the busiest traffic intersections in the city, hassle-free to a great extent. After a long wait, the Ashram flyover finally got extended till DND Flyway this March, easing the travel between south Delhi and Noida. The work for the six-lane 1.4km extension started in June 2020 and took 32 months to complete after missing a few deadlines. According to government estimates, at least 3.5 lakh vehicles pass daily through Ashram. The signal-free corridor connecting the NCR cities with central and south Delhi also provides a direct route between DND Flyway and AIIMS. The flyover has two ramps and one main carriageway connecting to DND Flyway. While the exit ramp towards Sarai Kale Khan was opened just after the inauguration by chief minister Arvind Kejriwal in March, the upward ramp from Ring Road was opened a few months later. Another major road infrastructure boost came in the form of the second flyover at Sarai Kale Khan ISBT. The 620-metre-long flyover was launched in October to ease the commute between ITO and Ashram by making the Ring Road stretch between Ashram and Chandgi Ram Akhada red light-free.

Master Plan 2041 waits for take-off

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Master Plan for Delhi (MPD), 2041, a vision for development in the national capital for the next two decades, is waiting for the final nod from the ministry of housing and urban affairs (MoHUA). The plan was supposed to see the light of day in January 2022, but take-off was delayed indefinitely. The draft plan emphasised inclusive development, environmental sustainability, green economy, 24x7 economy, infrastructure development to create sufficient housing for all sections and interventions such as transit-oriented development hubs. The plan was uploaded for public feedback in June 2021. It attracted 33,000 comments. After that, DDA held multiple stakeholder consultations. In April 2022, it reviewed the draft while incorporating the objections and suggestions. After lieutenant governor VK Saxena took over as DDA chairman, he reviewed the plan again and suggested additions. In September 2022, the Centre informed Supreme Court that the plan would be implemented on or before 30 April, 2023. That didn't happen. This was despite Saxena giving his approval on February 28. Among the three key issues discussed in the plan are land pooling, green development area (GDA) policy, and proposed amendments in the Delhi Development Act (DDA), 1957. The plan briefly mentions land pooling and GDA policies, but its regulations and amendments (mentioned in the Delhi Development Act, 1957) were prepared separately and would need approvals. As of now, the land pooling policy requires 70% contiguous land for the formation of a consortium. However, the amendment empowers the Centre to make land pooling mandatory even if 70% land is not available. On December 19, Union urban development minister Hardeep Puri said the plan is in the final stages and will require DDA and MCD to be able to manage the changes that are coming on a variety of subjects covered in the plan.

Drug Trafficker In Net After Year-Long Hunt In 7 States

Sherry Core Member Of Drug Cartel Operating On Border

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: After a year-long manhunt across seven states, Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested an alleged international drug trafficker named Shamsher Singh from Telangana. A court had issued a non-bailable warrant against the suspect and he was wanted by several police agencies.

Known as Sherry in the international narcotics world, Singh is allegedly a core member of the drug cartel operating on the Indo-Pakistan border that coordinates the influx of drugs from Afghanistan into Delhi and Punjab through the border, police officers claimed.

Ravindra Singh Yadav, special commissioner of police (Crime), said on Saturday that Sherry's name had cropped up in the interrogation of a few suspects nabbed by police last year. "We arrested Singh's brother, Mahender Pal, aka MH, last year. Proceedings to declare him an absconder are under way after he went underground," Yadav said.

The Crime Branch had first arrested a drug distributor named Shammi with Rs 22 lakh in cash and 5kg of heroin last year. Six kilograms of a chemical colloquially called DRM powder, used in the adulteration of drugs, was also recovered. "During interrogation, Shammi disclosed that he

THE DOSSIER

Name | **Shamsher Singh aka Sherry, from Punjab's Ferozepur**

Operation areas | **Delhi, Punjab**

Sourced drugs from | **Indo-Pak border**

Cartel linked to | **Afghanistan-based manufacturers**

Technologically Ahead

- Used virtual private network (VPN) to contact his sources, suppliers and receivers
- Through VPN, he used apps like Signal or WhatsApp Business to send encrypted messages
- Changed locations frequently, went to far-off places to connect online to dodge cops

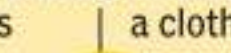
USP

- Sold drugs to youths after mixing DRM powder medicine
- Used primarily to treat abdominal pain, cramps and contractions, the powder apparently reduces after-effect of the drugs when the trip fades
- Made his drugs a hit among school- & office-goers



HOW HE WAS ARRESTED

- Went incognito after his aide was arrested by Crime Branch and NIA
- Shifted base to Telangana, started running



- a clothes shop as a front
- Cops mounted surveillance, nabbed him after trailing him for months



procured the recovered contraband from one Pankaj alias Sanju Baba. Pankaj, accused in several drug trafficking cases, was also arrested. Pankaj was arrested also by the National Investigation Agency because he was connected with an Afghanistan-based drug module," Yadav added.

During the interrogation of Shammi and Pankaj, the names of brothers MH and

Sherry emerged as key players of the cartel. Raids were conducted on their possible hideouts but the duo had gone underground. Later, MH was tracked to Ferozepur and police seized Rs 19.3 lakh in cash and 1.8kg of heroin from him. MH revealed how Sherry had established contact with suppliers from across the border and had been taking delivery of the contraband.

Woman held for kidnap of 4-yr-old boy

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A 35-year-old woman who couldn't have a child of her own after being married for five years allegedly kidnapped a boy after she saw him playing outside a house during a procession.

The four-year-old boy was kidnapped from the Mansarovar Park on Christmas Eve.

Police said they scanned around 250 CCTV cameras to trace the woman's movements. The accused has been identified as Reshma, a resident of Tilak Nagar. The boy was successfully recovered from her house, police said.

A case of kidnapping was registered on the complaint of the father of the child, Pawan Kumar, on December 24.

During the investigation, the police team obtained CCTV footage from more than 250 CCTV cameras, spanning a route of over 30 km. The footage showed a woman taking the child with her. The woman kept changing her route to avoid being identified. Police said the route and modes of transport used by her were thoroughly analysed and she was identified after they zeroed in on Tilak Nagar.

A police team then raided her residence to recover the child and arrest her.

"Reshma revealed that she had been married for the last five years but did not have a child from the marriage. So she planned to kidnap a male child. She found an opportunity during the Shahidi Diwas procession. During the interrogation, it was found that she is the sister of Heera alias Hau, a known criminal from MS Park," said Rohit Meena, DCP Shahdara.

Road rage incident: Police arrest khaki-clad assailant

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In a new twist to the alleged road rage incident in which 26-year-old Sachin Lohiya was thrashed by a group of men on Friday, the cops arrested on Saturday one of the assailants who was wearing a khaki jacket resembling one issued by Delhi Police to its personnel.

Chandan Chowdhary, DCP (South), said, "The accused has been identified as Manoj and he works as a security guard in the same company where the two of the men arrested earlier also worked. Manoj is not a policeman and had bought the jacket in Jharoda Kalan. It is clear that all those who wear khaki jackets are not cops."

A case was also registered based on the complaint of the men accused against Lohiya, who too was arrested and released on bail on Saturday. Police had earlier registered a case following Lohiya's complaint against Manoj, Kaviraj, Anil Kumar and Prabh



Sachin Lohiya was also arrested and released on bail

hat Sharma, all four of whom have been arrested.

Chowdhary said, "Two others accused, Ajay Kumar (brother of Kaviraj) and Sachin Yadav, are being interrogated. A case was registered against Lohiya on the complaint of Sharma."

As per Sharma's statement, he and driver Vikrant and two customers were in the 60 Foota Road in Chhatarpur in a Celerio car on Friday. Near metro pillar No 43, a Verna driven by Lohiya hit the Celerio on the rear. An altercation broke out and Lohiya allegedly beat up

Sharma, who summoned Manoj, Anil, Kaviraj and others who together thrashed Lohiya. During the skirmish, Sharma and Lohiya were injured and were taken to AIIMS Trauma Centre. Police recorded the statements of eyewitnesses during the investigation.

Lohiya, who was arrested and released on bail, claimed on Saturday, "Apart from my legs, I have injuries all over my face, head and chest. I am still unable to understand why the men thrashed me in such a manner. One of the men, who was wearing a khaki jacket, also thrust a revolver into my head."

Lohiya also alleged that the local cops weren't cooperating with him and filed an FIR under less stringent sections of the law. "They damaged my mobile phone, took away the cash I had in the car. The cops did not consider all these," the 26-year-old said. Lohiya, who has since been discharged from hospital, claimed he was unable to go to sleep because of the assault he had faced.

65-yr-old woman found dead close to home, 'godman' husband suspected

New Delhi: A 65-year-old woman was allegedly stabbed to death in Ranhola on Saturday morning. Police said the woman was found dead in a plot close to her house.

The prime suspect in the case is her husband, who was earlier in the army and has now become a godman, police said.

According to police, the deceased has been identified as Beermati (65). She allegedly

went to a plot near her house around 5am on Saturday, and her daughter-in-law, Asha, who went to the plot around 5.30am, found her dead there, police said.

"During the inquiry, it came to the fore that she had a dispute regarding property with her husband, Ishwar (70), an ex-serviceman who became a 'baba'. The crime and FSL teams were called.

Efforts are being made to identify the accused. The deceased had three daughters and a son, Devender, who is 47 years old. The father had separated and lived somewhere with his youngest daughter, Pramila," said Jimmy Chiram, DCP (Outer).

A case of murder has been registered and teams have been formed to nab the accused, officials said. **TNN**

NE riots: Two acquitted of rioting, assembly charges

New Delhi: A Delhi court has acquitted two men — Firoj Khan and Mohammad Anwar — who were accused of rioting and unlawful assembly during the 2020 Northeast Delhi riots.

The case pertains to a complaint by Suren Kumar Bansal, whose shop was vandalised and looted by a mob. Two of his motorcycles were also set ablaze and he suffered a loss of around Rs 6 lakh. Stating that a mob of 1,500 to 2,000 people was present at the location, the court of additional sessions judge Pulastya Pramachala pointed out various discrepancies in the statements of two eyewitnesses.

"...the evidence produced by the prosecution though shows that a riotous incident had taken place on February 24, 2020, but there is no evidence to show that either of the accused persons was part of the responsible mob. In that situation, both the accused herein cannot be held responsible for the incident probed in this case," the court said.

The court said there were discrepancies in the statements of the complainant, Bansal, and head constable Vikas.

Vikas had testified that the incident took place at 2pm, while Bansal testified that he was in his shop till 6pm and till then the shop had neither been vandalised nor set ablaze, the court said. **TNN**

Court sees no threat, gives MCOCA case accused bail

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A Delhi court has granted bail to a man accused under the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA), stating that there was nothing on record to suggest that the accused, Rajesh aka Honey, was likely to commit any offence while on bail, as it was evident from the records that there had been no criminal complaints against him in the last six years.

"Moreover, the restriction, as enshrined in section 21(5) of MCOCA, for grant of bail is not attracted against the present applicant/accused as it is not reported that he has committed any offence while on bail in an offence under this Act," the court of additional sessions judge Shivali Sharma said.

Delhi Police had registered a case under sections 3 and 4 of the MCOCA against Rajesh. The case against him was at the stage of arguments on framing charges.

The court noted that one of the allegations against him was that of being a member of the Salman Tyagi gang, which allegedly extorted money from builders, businessmen, financiers and bookies with the help of firearms, but there was no statement to support this claim.

"I am of the opinion that it is a fit case to grant the benefit of bail to the accused, Rajesh, pending trial. However, the bail has to be conditional, considering the nature of the allegations against him and to ensure that he does not indulge in any kind of criminal offence in the future," the court said.

It allowed the bail application on furnishing a bail bond of Rs 50,000 with one surety in the like amount. Other conditions imposed by the court included surrender of the accused's passport, providing his mobile phone number, not leaving the national capital region, informing the investigating officer of a change in his address, and refraining from contacting witnesses and the complainant.

The court said there were three other criminal cases registered against him, but there was no material to show that the FIRs pertain to activities of any organised crime syndicate or the alleged gang. **TNN**

'Drunk' cop allegedly kills e-rick driver in W Delhi

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A traffic cop who was allegedly drunk killed an e-rickshaw driver on Saturday morning in west Delhi's Mayapuri area. A bottle of alcohol, glass, water and other items were apparently found in his car. Vichitra Veer, DCP (West) neither confirmed nor denied that the accused police personnel was inebriated, only said, "The medical examination of the accused has been conducted."

A case for causing death due to negligence has been registered at Mayapuri police station. Following the incident over 100 e-rickshaw drivers staged a protest at Mayapuri police station against the killer cop.

Police received a call around 8.30am on Saturday regarding an accident between an e-rickshaw and a silver car driven by a man in a police uniform. DCP Veer said the e-rickshaw was being driven by Amit Jha, a resident of Sagarpur. "Jha's e-rickshaw met with an accident with a Swift car driven by Mukesh Kumar, a Delhi

POLICE SAY

The e-rickshaw was being driven by Amit Jha, a resident of Sagarpur. Jha's e-rickshaw met with an accident with a Swift car driven by Mukesh Kumar, a Delhi Police officer currently posted with the traffic unit. The injured was rushed to DDU Hospital, where he died later

Police officer currently posted with the traffic unit. The injured was rushed to DDU Hospital, where he died later," said Veer.

While police sources said that Kumar was arrested, the DCP did not give any clarifications on this.

Jha is survived by his wife and four children. Ashish, Jha's nephew, claimed, "The cop was drunk and was driving his private car. My uncle was taken to the hospital but he passed away soon after. I asked the cops to get a medical test done on the cop, but they said they would do so in time. Later, they did take the accused for tests, and when I asked them why they hadn't informed me, they said they would do their job on their own terms."

E-rickshaw driver Mukesh Gupta, who was present at the site where the incident took place, alleged the car was being driven in a rash and negligent manner. Gupta said the car first hit another e-rickshaw though nothing happened to the driver. "It was later that the Swift rammed Jha's e-rickshaw. Then in a hurry to escape, the cop hastily reversed his car, crushing the rickshaw driver's head which caused his death," claimed Gupta. Other e-rickshaw drivers said the accused, while fleeing, hit another car and despite the best efforts of the Wagon-R driver to chase him down, the policeman had sped towards Mayapuri police station and into the police station.

No exit from Rajiv Chowk Metro Stn after 9 pm on New Year's Eve

New Delhi: The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Saturday said commuters will not be allowed to exit Rajiv Chowk metro station after 9 pm on New Year's Eve to ease overcrowding. However, entry of passengers into the station will be allowed.

In a statement, DMRC principal executive director Anuj Dayal said that as advised by police authorities, exit from Rajiv Chowk metro station will not be allowed from 9pm onwards on New Year's Eve to ease overcrowding.

Entry of passengers will be allowed till the departure of the last train from the station on December 31. The commuters are requested to plan their journey accordingly, he said. **PTI**

ADVERTORIAL



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www.kriyayogashyamacharan.org

The 90th Sublime Advent Anniversary of Mahamahopadhyaya Yogacharya Dr. Ashoke Kumar Chatterjee, Founder Spiritual Director, Yogiraj Shyamacharan Mission (YSM) and Shyamacharan Sanatan Mission (SSM) was commemorated on a grand scale at the Spiritual Centre of Yogiraj Shyamacharan Mission at Degaon, Pune on 24th December, 2023.



Release of a Divine Commemorative Coin and a textbook on Kriyayoga for the undergraduate (Honours) course of Patna University on the 90th Advent Anniversary of Mahamahopadhyaya Yogacharya Dr. Ashoke Kumar Chatterjee.

On this Divine Occasion, a classical Indian dance performance was followed by the release of specially crafted commemorative gold and silver coins. The event also witnessed the release of publications such as the 90th Advent Day Souvenir, release of "Humble endeavours to instil Kriyayoga principles", a compilation of talks delivered pan Bharata and abroad by Sri Shantanu Kapur, Founder Member and Senior Advisor (YSM and SSM) and Smt Joyati Kapur, Founder Working President (YSM and SSM). "Yogiraj Sri Shyamacharan Lahiree evam Kriyayoga ka darshan vigyan" - a textbook for under graduate (Honours) course for colleges across all universities within the state of Bihar was also released by Dr R. C. Sinha - Former Chairman, Indian Council of Philosophical Research (ICPR) and Dr Rajesh Kumar Singh, Head of Department, Philosophy, Patna University alongwith Sr Shantanu Kapur and Smt. Joyati Kapur.

This textbook authored by Smt. Kapur is a compilation from the TRILOGY - "Purana Purusha Yogiraj Sri Shyamacharan Lahiree"; "Shyamacharan Kriyayoga Ebam Advaitabad" and "Kaun Hai Yeh Shyamacharan" authored by Mahamahopadhyaya Yogacharya Dr. Ashoke Kumar Chatterjee, the only one to unfold the abstruse esoteric of Lahiree Mahasaya hence Kriyayoga.

A play titled "Grihasth ke Bhagavan Yogiraj Sri Shyamacharan Lahiree", on the life of Lahiree Mahasaya, based on the scripture "Purana Purusha" was also enacted in the presence of the illustrious dignitaries. The programme's grand finale was a spectacular fireworks display inferring the kindling of fire within us and ensuing soul visualisation soul realisation through the practice of Kriyayoga.

Always sleepy? You may have neurological disorder

Anuja Jaiswal
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: If you feel like dozing off during the daytime despite a good sleep at night, you may be suffering from "idiopathic hypersomnia", a neurologic sleep disorder. This makes people feel sleep deprived or results in them waking up in a disoriented state.

This was revealed in a study titled "Prevalence and Course of Idiopathic Hypersomnia in the Wisconsin Sleep Cohort Study", which was published this month in the online issue of Neurology®, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology. Researchers examined sleep data for 792 people with an average age of 59.

According to researchers, this neurological disorder may not be as rare as once thought. This makes it difficult to complete day-to-day activities, decreasing a person's quality of life.

The lead study author, David T Plante, stated, "It has been difficult to determine the prevalence of idiopathic hypersomnia because of the expensive and time-consuming sleep testing required to make a diagnosis. We examined data from a large sleep

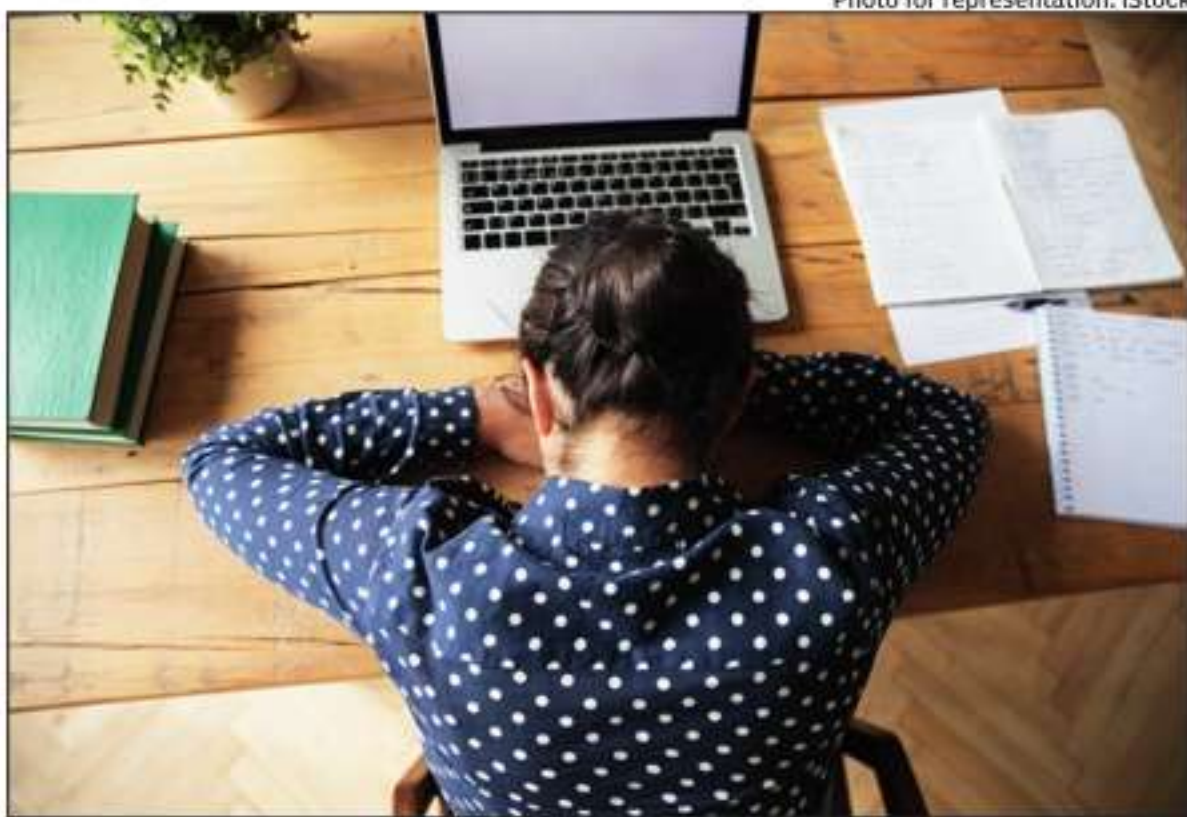


Photo for representation: iStock

NOT A RARE PROBLEM

study and found that this condition is much more common than previous estimates, and is as prevalent as some other common neurologic and psychiatric conditions such as epilepsy, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia."

However, efforts to identify, diagnose and treat those impaired by idiopathic hypersomnia are needed. Additional research may also clarify the causes of this disorder and lead to new treatments.

Agreeing with the researchers, Dr Praveen Gupta, princi

pals director of the department of neurology at Fortis Memorial Research Institute, said, "It is not rare, but it is not very common either. However, knowing the cause is important for providing appropriate treatment in order to improve quality of life. It can be diagnosed by doing an overnight polysomnography (records your brain waves, the oxygen level in your blood, and your heart rate and breathing during sleep) along with multiple sleep latency tests, which capture ex

According to researchers, this neurological disorder may not be as rare as once thought. This makes it difficult to complete day-to-day activities, decreasing a person's quality of life

cessive sleep during the day without any cause of disturbance." It can be treated by multiple medications which promote wakefulness. So medication can actually improve the intrusion of sleep in normal wakefulness and make the quality of life better, he added.

To get to know the cause of excessive sleepiness, Dr JD Mukherji, vice-chairman and head of the neurology department, Max Super Speciality Hospital, Saket, advised the patients to undergo regular blood tests, brain scans, besides sleep studies, as it could be due to psychological or medical issues too. "We should also check if any medications are making us sleepy. Diseases linked to too much sleepiness often come from general health problems like liver or kid

ney issues, or brain-related problems like dementia and psychiatric disorders like depression. We don't know exactly why idiopathic hypersomnia happens, but family history and genes may be factors," he said.

"Recognising the potential occupational implications of idiopathic hypersomnia, the goal is to provide targeted interventions that not only alleviate symptoms but also improve cognitive function and overall quality of life," said Dr Biplob Das, director & senior consultant, Neurology and Interventional Neurology, Narayana Hospital.

According to researchers, on a survey of sleepiness, having a score range of zero to 24, that asks questions like how likely a person is to doze off while sitting, talking and in a stopped car, people with the disorder had an average score of 14 while those without it had an average score of nine. A score of higher than 10 is of concern. During the sleep studies, people with idiopathic hypersomnia took an average of 4 minutes to fall asleep at night and 6 minutes during naps, compared to an average of 13 minutes at night and 12 minutes during naps for people without the disorder.

CM Back Home After 10 Days Of Vipassana

ED Summons Due On Jan 3, AAP Finishes Survey

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Chief minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday returned from Anandgarh village in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district after completing the 10-day Vipassana course.

The chief minister posted on social media that he was feeling re-energised and was looking forward to getting back to serving people now. "Returned today after 10 days of Vipassana meditation. This sadhana gives immense peace. From today onwards, we will again start serving the public with new energy," Kejriwal tweeted.

Though the CM was supposed to go for the meditation course on December 19, he had to delay his programme by a day due to the first meeting of the INDIA bloc after the assembly polls in five states.

Due to the course of his Vipassana retreat, which Kejriwal said was "pre-scheduled" and in public domain, the CM also skipped the summons served on him by the enforcement directorate to appear before it on December 21 in a case related to alleged money laundering charges in the now withdrawn excise policy of 2021-22.

Urging the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to withdraw the summons, Kejriwal had



KEJRIWAL SAYS

Returned today after 10 days of Vipassana meditation. This sadhana gives immense peace. From today onwards, we will again start serving the public with new energy

said those were "illegal and politically motivated" like the previous one sent to him in November, which the CM had skipped. He had also observed that the summons didn't specify if he was being called for questioning as an accused or a witness and as an individual or the CM of Delhi or the national convenor of Aam Aadmi Party.

The ED, however, sent another summons asking

Kejriwal to appear on January 3, when he was away for Vipassana. The AAP leaders questioned the summons saying those can only be personally served to the person in question but Kejriwal was away.

AAP, meanwhile, said the 'Mai Bhi Kejriwal' signature camp, which was launched by the party to take the opinion of people if CM Arvind Kejriwal should resign or run the government from jail should he get arrested in a fake case, concluded on Saturday.

AAP's general secretary (organisation) and Rajya Sabha member Sandeep Pathak called a meeting of the party's office-bearers and said the second phase of the campaign would begin on January 4. In 'Mai Bhi Kejriwal Jan Samvaad', functionaries and elected representatives of the party will hold public meetings across the city.

Delhi BJP spokesperson Praveen Shankar Kapoor claimed AAP was totally cut off from people and its 'Main Bhi Kejriwal' campaign was not visible anywhere. "The entire campaign was limited to posting photographs on X (formerly Twitter). Similarly, the new public dialogue programme, too, will be limited to leaders of the party meeting its small cadre," Kapoor said.

Removal scare: Sunehri Bagh Masjid moves HC

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The imam of Sunehri Bagh Masjid has moved Delhi High Court against a public notice issued by the New Delhi Municipal Council calling for feedback from the general public about the possible removal of the mosque due to traffic congestion in the area. The petition, arguing that it is a 150-year-old structure symbolic of the cultural heritage of the city, sought the quashing of NDMC's December 24 notice.

On Saturday, the single-judge bench of Justice Manoj Jain wondered why the imam had filed the plea instead of approaching Delhi Waqf Board but scheduled a hearing of the matter on January 8 next year.



The imam has sought quashing of an NDMC notice seeking public opinion on the possible removal of the 150-year-old mosque

Saying as imam of the masjid, he was "duty bound" to protect the place of prayer, the petitioner also requested

the court not ask NDMC, Heritage Conservation Committee, Delhi Traffic Police and the Union housing and urban

affairs ministry not to cause any damage to the mosque.

"The existence of the heritage building/Sunehri Bagh Masjid has never been a problem of any nature/orientation or magnitude, rather a reference to collective growth and development of the Lutyens' zone," the petition said.

The plea claimed that respondents with mala-fide intention were targeting the masjid without research, data, statistics or demonstration to show the existence of the mosque or the activities at the mosque caused traffic congestion.

The plea stated that NDMC, despite being the local body that was entrusted with the responsibility to ensure protection and conservation of the heritage buildings in

the New Delhi area was trying to demolish the Sunehri Bagh Masjid, which, the petition claimed, was a heritage building in existence for more than one-and-a-half centuries.

Further, stating that in no manner could the traffic congestion be attributed to the mid-road mosque, which has existed at the same spot for over a century, the petition argued that any impediment to the movement of vehicles was due to the buildings developed later. "In view of the advancements in traffic engineering technology, the respondents are duty bound to resolve the alleged traffic congestion by implementation of the advance techniques and not by removal of a heritage building," the plea said.

DJB connects with 2L people to clean Yamuna

New Delhi: Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has claimed that it has connected with more than 2 lakh people over the entire year under its public outreach programme to clean the Yamuna.

DJB and non-governmental organisations associated with it are running multiple activities and programmes to increase public participation in the Yamuna cleaning campaign.

"The total number of people involved in the 'Jan Jagran Abhiyan' is 2,10,376. In November alone, more than 13,000 people joined the campaign," said an official.

DJB further said that there is a steady increase in the number of people participating in the public awareness campaign that is going on under Yamuna Action Plan 3 (YAP-III).

The campaign has been successful in reaching 17,805 households so far in different areas of the national capital, it said.

"Street plays, door-to-door publicity, group discussions, training sessions, mohalla meetings and self-help group meetings are held under the program to generate awareness about the need to clean the Yamuna," TNN

Mosque officials meet LG, praise Mehrauli park revamp

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: About 100 imams, aalims and muezzeens from mosques across the city participated in 'Samvaad@Raj Niwas', an interactive dialogue undertaken by lieutenant governor VK Saxena at his official residence in Civil Lines.

According to officials, several issues were raised by the imams and muezzeens in the session, including their pending salaries and poor sanitation around mosques in various parts of the city.

"They appreciated the development work carried out at Mehrauli Archaeological Park, which has led to an increase in footfall," said a Raj Niwas official.

Delhi government sources said the file pertaining to the salary of imams had been lingering on the desk of the LG for the last two months. "We hope he clears the file so that all imams get their payments. The Delhi government has already recommended the suspension of divisional commissioner Ashwani Kumar for non-payment of imams' salaries for two years," said a source.

Raj Niwas officials said that in the last 18 months, since Saxena took over as LG, he had already met more than 50,000 people — averaging about 3,000 per month — belonging to varied sections in formal and informal gatherings at the Raj Niwas.

"The LG has mostly been on



At least 100 imams, aalims and muezzeens turn up for Samvaad@Raj Niwas

the streets of Delhi trying to address various issues pertaining to the city. Upon taking over, he had announced that rather than being the LG he would strive to serve as a 'local guardian' of the city and keep the doors of the otherwise opaque and colonial Raj Niwas open to the public, where anyone and everyone could walk in with their issues," said a Raj Niwas official.

Raj Niwas said in a statement that over the past year and a half, on various formal occasions such as the 'At Home' functions, celebration of statehood days and get-togethers of various professional groups, Saxena freely mixed with people and tried to address their issues.

"In hundreds of meetings with delegations that included those of teachers, students, professors, lawyers, traders,

doctors, street vendors, RWAs, residents of unauthorised colonies, slum dwellers, industry associations and residents and farmers from rural and urbanised villages, the LG interacted with the people along with the officials of departments concerned and tried to solve their problems concurrently," another official said.

Officials said these meetings were already in vogue at the Raj Niwas but took a formal shape in the form of 'Samvaad@Raj Niwas'. These interactions are expected to continue with various groups in the time to come, they added.

"In the same series, Saxena will be meeting residents and farmers from villages of Delhi and have an interactive dialogue on DDA's 'Dilli Gramodaya Abhiyaan' on January 2, 2024," said an official.

Bailable warrant against IO for no-show in court

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A Delhi court recently issued a bailable warrant against a Delhi Police inspector, who is an investigating officer (IO) in a murder case, for his failure to appear before the court.

The court of additional sessions judge Raj Kumar also issued a notice under section 350 of the CrPC (punishment for non-attendance by a witness in obedience to summons) to the IO. "Issue bailable warrants in the sum of Rs 5,000 against Inspector Tej Dutt Gaur," the court directed.

The court was hearing the case of a murder that took place in Nabi Karim in 2020. The prosecution alleged that a man was stabbed to death by four people while they were playing cards.

Advocate Sanjay Sharma, counsel for one of the accused in the case, submitted before the court that despite various directions from the apex court that in heinous cases the IO of the case shall remain present for the assistance of the court and the public prosecutor, the IO did not appear before the court in this case.

Interestingly, the complainant in the case, the wife of the deceased, has not been traceable for al-

The court was hearing the case of a murder that took place in Nabi Karim in 2020. The prosecution alleged that a man was stabbed to death by four people while they were playing cards

most three years. Her parents appeared after being summoned and told the court that they had filed a missing complaint.

The prosecution told the court that if the complainant doesn't show up after they finish presenting their evidence, they will either drop her from the witness list or follow the court's directions for further action.

The counsel for the accused argued before the court that there was no use in lingering on the matter and requested the court to drop the woman from the witness list as the accused persons have been in custody since 2020.

"Two public witnesses have already been examined, and now only officials' testimonies are pending. Keeping in view the said submission, the complainant may kindly be dropped from the list of witnesses," submitted the counsel before the court.

Nirbhaya gang-rape case judge retires from HC

New Delhi: Delhi High Court judge Justice Yogesh Khanna, who awarded death penalty to the four convicts in the Nirbhaya gang-rape case as a judicial officer in 2013, Saturday demitted office after a tenure of seven years.

Justice Khanna became a permanent judge of the high court on November 8, 2016.

As an additional sessions judge, Justice Khanna had, on September 13, 2013, handed capital punishment to the four convicts in the brutal gang-rape and murder case, saying it fell in the rarest of rare category as the crime was committed against a 23-year-old woman in a "bestial" and "hair-raising" manner.

He had said that the inhuman and ghastly acts of the convicts shocked the collective conscience of the nation and deserved exemplary punishment.

The death penalty was finally executed on March 20, 2020.

On the night of December 16, 2012, the paramedical student was gang-raped on a moving bus in south Delhi and brutalised so grievously that she succumbed to her injuries on December 29, 2012 in a Singapore hospital.

During his term in the high court, Justice Khanna passed several significant orders and judgements.

In 2018, as part of a division bench headed by then high court judge Justice S Ravindra Bhat, Justice Khanna had dismissed US-based agro-industries major Monsanto Technology's plea to enforce the patent for its BT cotton seeds in India.

Born on December 31, 1961, Justice Khanna completed his LL.B. from Campus Law Centre, Delhi in 1986. In 2000, he joined Delhi Higher Judicial Services and eventually became the District Judge of North-West District, Rohini Courts, Delhi, before being elevated to the high court. PTI

ओ३म्

स्व० श्री श्याम सुन्दर आर्य

(15.08.1915 – 31.12.2009)

महर्षि दयानन्द के विचारों से ओत-प्रोत एक सच्चे आर्य का जीवन जीने वाले, आदर्श व्यक्तित्व के धनी, कर्मठ कर्मयोगी, हम सबके प्रेरणा स्रोत एवं संस्थापक बंसल ग्रुप ऑफ इन्डस्ट्रीज जिनका आज चौदहवाँ पुण्य स्मृति दिवस है, उन्हें हम शत-शत नमन करते हैं तथा उनके बताए आदर्शों व मार्ग पर चलने का संकल्प करते हैं।

अनीता-अरुण बंसल (पुत्रवधु - पुत्र)
सोनाक्षी - प्रणव बंसल (पौत्रवधु - पौत्र) एवम् समस्त बंसल परिवार

Management & All Staff

Bansal Wire Industries Limited

TIMES TRIBUTES

RATE CARD

Publications	Rates per sq. cms
TOID Capital + NBT (Delhi+NCR)	1295
TOID Full Run ## + NBT (Delhi+NCR)	1360
THE TIMES OF INDIA (Delhi+NCR)	780
THE TIMES OF INDIA (Delhi) Full Run##	900
NAVBHARAT TIMES (Delhi+NCR)	595
THE ECONOMIC TIMES (Delhi+NCR)	715
SANDHYA TIMES (Delhi)	100

► *Placement on specified obit pages only. ► This rate benefit is extended up till the size of 320 sq. cm only. ► ## Full Run includes Delhi City + NCR (Including Gurgaon + Noida) + Chandigarh + Western U.P. + Uttarakhand ► TOI Capital (Delhi + NCR) Includes TOI Gurgaon + TOI Noida.

To place an Obituary announcement or Remembrance message please call
Vinod: 9958992088
Pankaj : 8130604727

HONOUR. COURAGE. BRAVERY.

Three words that help us cope with your loss.

The silent joy of remembering a loved one. The moments you shared together. Little moments that make life beautiful.

Share them. With Friends. Relatives. Neighbours. Colleagues. With all those whose lives the departed Soul has touched. Because while life goes on, when you share memories, they stay on forever.

Publications	Total Outlay	SPACE FOR PHOTO
The Times of India Delhi/NCR	5,600	100mm x 100mm
TOI+NBT (Delhi/NCR)	8,800	100mm x 100mm
TOI+ET (Delhi/NCR)	6,600	100mm x 100mm

Maximum 10 lines

REMEMBRANCE

SHARING MEMORIES

For any information call

Vinod : 9958992088

Pankaj : 8130604727

REMEMBRANCE SHARING MEMORIES

Lt. Gen K.B. Mehta, PVSM

Miss you papa

Sunil & Sanjay Mehta

Late Shri OM Prakash Aneja
(15.10.1949 - 31.12.2017)

Your love, blessings and memories will always remain in our hearts. Trying to live by your principles and follow your footsteps. We all miss you. Aneja Family, Gulati Family, Chhabra Family. # 9810253033

In Loving Memory on 14th Death Anniversary of our beloved

MRS. SANTOSH RALLI
(03-03-1942 to 31-12-2009)

Your life was a blessing. Your memory a treasure. You are loved beyond words and missed beyond measures. We miss you everyday and every moment. Deeply missed and remembered by: Bhupesh and Ruchi Ralli, Alka and Rajiv Kakkar, Vimmi and Anil Passi, Dipish, Rijul, Rushil, Rohan and Shriya. Rallis, Friends and Relatives # 9810002940, 9811054404.



Modi Sarkar Ki Guarantee,
New Recognition to
Traditional Skills

This scheme will not only enhance skills of artisans and craftspeople from all over the country but the products made by them will also get new recognition in the world.

- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

PM Vishwakarma

Benefits of Scheme

PM Vishwakarma Certificate and ID Card

Training for Skill Upgradation and Stipend of Rs. 500 per day

Toolkit upto Rs. 15 thousand

Collateral free loan up to Rs. 3 lakh for Vishwakarma brothers and sisters

Incentive for Digital Transactions

Marketing Assistance like Quality Certification, Branding, and Advertisement for products

18 types of Traditional Artisans and Craftspeople will be benefitted

Carpenter

Boat Maker

Armourer

Tailor

Garland Maker

Mason

Goldsmith

Potter

Cobbler/Shoesmith/
Footwear Artisan

Washerman

Barber

Locksmith

Hammer and
Tool Kit Maker

Sculptor (Stone
Carver), Stone
Breaker

Fishing Net
Maker

Blacksmith

Basket/Mat/Broom
Maker/Coir Weaver

Doll & Toy Maker
(Traditional)

CBC 25101/13/0007/2324

For enrollment in the scheme, Vishwakarma brothers and sisters may visit their nearest Common Service Centre

Fog Veil Lifts For A Day, But City Air Turns Almost Severe

AQI To Stay Very Poor For Next Week, GRAP III Stays In Force

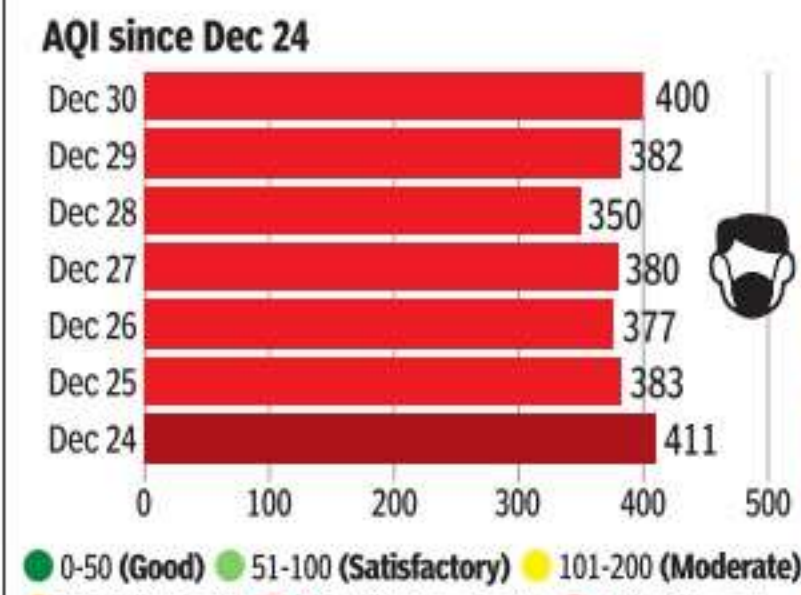
TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi saw a significant improvement in visibility with the fog layer lifting on Saturday morning. At 8.30 am, Safdarjung, the city's base station, recorded the lowest visibility of 500m. The situation improved in a couple of hours. The weather department has, however, issued a yellow alert for Sunday when dense to moderate fog is likely to be witnessed in several areas of the city.

Meanwhile, there was a sudden deterioration in the air quality. It turned severe in several areas of the city. The average air quality index of the national capital, on a scale of 0 to 500, was 400, as against 386 a day earlier. An AQI between 301 and 400 is considered 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

The air quality is likely to be very poor for the next one week. According to the IITM's air quality early warning system, "as weather conditions are not favourable for effective dispersion of pollutants, emissions from firecrackers if burnt on Sunday may deteriorate the air quality. The predominant surface wind is likely to be coming from southeast/north direction in Delhi with wind speed of 4-8 kmph and partly cloudy sky with moderate to

NOTHING TO CHEER ABOUT?



> Yellow alert for dense to moderate fog on Sunday

> Visibility improved on Saturday, with minimum visibility at

Palam at 500 metres

> Delhi records second coldest day of the season; maximum temperature at Safdarjung at 20.3

degrees Celsius

> AQI deteriorates again to near-severe category

> GRAP's stage III in force since Dec 22



Photo: Rajesh Mehta

Haryana to spend ₹300cr to clear Aravali garbage hill

Vishakha.Chaman
@timesgroup.com

Gurgaon: The Haryana government will end up spending at least Rs 300 crore to clear the Bandhwari landfill around the Aravalis that has been used to dump the waste generated by the city and Faridabad for years.

Earlier this week, chief minister Manohar Lal Khattar approved three tenders worth around Rs 150 crore to process 15 lakh metric tonne of legacy waste at Bandhwari. The move comes ahead of the state government's hearing in the case at the National Green Tribunal on January 9.

The government had earlier informed the NGT that 33 lakh metric tonne of waste needed to be cleared from Bandhwari. But the tribunal imposed a Rs 100 crore environmental compensation on the government for the piling waste. In September last year, the Gurgaon municipal corporation hired five firms to clear 17 lakh metric tonne of trash.

For this, the government had earlier issued tenders worth Rs 152.7 crore. Officials said they decided on a cost of Rs 888-917 for treating every tonne of waste.

According to a report submitted by the government at the NGT on December 19, it has cleared 15.6 lakh metric tonne of waste between January and November this year. The report has also claimed that an additional 20



File Photo

GREEN HEARING: NGT will hear the Bandhwari case on January 9

lakh metric tonne would be removed from Bandhwari by June next year. This will add up to 35 lakh metric tonne, 2 lakh tonne of which will be fresh waste.

The municipal corporation is hoping to recover some of the amount from its concessionaire Ecogreen, which, it said, was actually supposed to clear the waste at Bandhwari. But ties between the civic body and the private company have soured of late. The corporation has issued a preliminary termination notice to Ecogreen and is planning to end its services in three months.

Officials said they had already slapped a recovery notice of Rs 129.2 crore to Ecogreen for failing to clear the Bandhwari waste. Additionally, other private companies hired for waste processing have also been fined Rs 7.1 crore for running behind schedule.

"The chief minister held a meeting with the municipal

commissioner on Thursday and gave his approval for hiring companies needed to process the additional waste. We had finalised on the companies and were waiting for the CM's approval. Two of these companies were hired earlier and are already clearing waste at the landfill. A third will need some time to set up machinery and start the work. We will issue the work order next," said a civic body official.

The NGT has asked the director of the urban local bodies department and the municipal commissioners of the city and Faridabad to present at the hearing on January 9. The green tribunal had earlier questioned the role of the government in clearing the legacy waste and sought immediate action.

City municipal commissioner PC Meena and GMDA executive engineer Vikas Malik did not respond to calls.

BJP protests against govt 'inaction' over air pollution

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Delhi BJP held a protest on Saturday alleging that while the capital was facing "extreme" air pollution, the chief minister and the environment minister were missing from action.

Delhi BJP leaders wore oxygen masks and protested in four congested areas of the city, including at ITO crossing, 11 Murti T-point, Kartavya Path, and the roundabout near Le Meridien Hotel.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said that Delhi had been facing extreme pollution for the last one year due to the increase in dust particles in the air, raising the air quality index (AQI). He further alleged that pollution had increased since the last week of October due to the burning of crop residues, mainly in Punjab.

"The Delhi government's winter action plan on pollution has totally failed. In fact, they don't have any plan to control the ever increasing dust pollution in the city," Sachdeva said.

No immediate reaction was available from the AAP government.

"It is regrettable that the chief minister and the environment minister are missing from action at such a time. For the last one week, the CM has been away on vacation, while environment minister Gopal Rai has not spoken a word," Sachdeva alleged.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
OF HEALTH, HOWRAH
e-TENDER Notice
Ref: NIE-T No. CMOH/HOW/4858
Dated: 28.12.2023
e-Tender is hereby invited for Providing 2 (two) outsourced drivers through agency to drive the Govt. ALS Ambulance in favour of CMOH, Howrah. Last date of application: 12.01.2024. Tender Starting Date: 05.01.2024. Visit at www.wbhealth.gov.in & www.wbhealth.gov.in Chief Medical Officer of Health, Howrah ICA- 126806(3)/2023

পশ্চিমবঙ্গ সরকার
চিকিৎসা বিভাগ
জেলা মুখ্য স্বাস্থ্য অধিকারিক, বাঁড়গাম জেলা, ভারত
নিম্নলিখিত কাজের জন্য এ-টেন্ডার আহ্বান করছেন।
এ-টেন্ডার নম্বর CMOH/JGM/2023/5559 তারিখ: 27.12.2023 এবং টেন্ডার আইডি: 2023_HFW_632170_1
কাজের নাম: Selection of Agency for outsourced driver for Govt. vehicle. এ-টেন্ডার বজায় রাখুন: 08.01.2024 বিকাল 05 টা অবধি।
বিস্তারিত জানা শুধুমাত্র www.wbhealth.gov.in
জেলা মুখ্য স্বাস্থ্য অধিকারিক, বাঁড়গাম জেলা ICA- 126805(2)/2023

DFS ready for New Year emergencies

New Delhi: The Delhi Fire Services (DFS) is prepared to handle any emergency in the national capital during the New Year's celebrations, an official said on Saturday. In an effort to ensure safety, 10 to 15 water tenders will be strategically stationed during the celebrations, DFS chief Atul Garg said.

"Our priority is to maintain a joyful atmosphere while prioritising the safety of all people," Garg added. To run things smoothly on New Year's eve, security has also been beefed up in Delhi.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
PWD TENDER NOTICE
EE, PWD, Darjeeling Division invites online e-tender for the work of: 1. Construction of Protection wall at Valley allied works (damaged due to landslide) at chainage 10.10km of Peshoke under PWD Darjeeling Sub-Division During the year 2023-2024. Estimated Amount: Rs. 8,79,628-00 Tender ID No. 2023_WBPWD_632931_1 e-NIT No. 22 SI No. 1 of 2023-2024. Bid submission start date (online) 04/12/2024 from 11.00 A.M. Bid submission closing date (online) 15/12/2024 upto 5.30 P.M. Corrigendum if any will be published in website only. Details of NIT and Tender Documents may be downloaded from website: <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> Sd/- EE, PWD, Darjeeling Division. ICA- 126822(3)/2023

e-Tender Notice
A few typographical errors took place in the advertisement published on 26.12.2023 in connection to e-tender vide e-NIT No. 21 of 2023-24 (Tender ID: 2023_PRD_629304_1 to 3) & e-NIT No. 22 of 2023-24 (Tender ID: 2023_PRD_629782_1 to 2). Dated: 22.12.2023. The corrected advertisement is to be read as noted below vide same e-NIT. e-Tender is published on date 23.12.2023 for the 5 nos. of works under RURAL connectivity road works: 1) vide e-NIT No. 21 of 2023-24, (Tender ID: 2023_PRD_629304_1 to 3) & 2) vide e-NIT No. 22 of 2023-24, (Tender ID: 2023_PRD_629782_1 to 2) respectively under Coochbehar District. All details may be had from this office Notice Board and in website: <https://wbtdenders.gov.in>, www.wbprd.gov.in Sd/-
Superintending Engineer
P&RD Deptt. Govt. of West Bengal
North Bengal Circle, Jalpaiguri

POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.
(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Enterprise)
"Vidut Bhawan" Near ISBT, Crossing, Saharanpur Road, Majra, Dehradun-248002
Corporate ID U40101UR2004GOI028675, Tel. No. 0135-2646000, Fax No. 0135-2643460
Website: www.ptcul.org

PUBLIC NOTICE
Inviting Comments on the Petition filed by PTCUL for approval of the proposed Transmission Charges for FY 2024-25

Salient Points of the ARR/Tariff Petition

1. Power Transmission Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited (PTCUL), a Transmission Licensee in the State of Uttarakhand has filed a Petition before the Commission for approval of Truing Up of FY 2022-23 based on audited Accounts & Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2023-24 and the Revised ARR for FY 2024-25. The summary of the proposals of the intra-State network for the aforesaid is given in the following Table:

Summary of True Up, APR & ARR of PTCUL for intra-State transmission network (₹Crore)

S. No.	Particulars	FY 2022-23 (True Up)	FY 2023-24 (APR)	FY 2024-25 (ARR)			
		Approved (T.O. dt. 31.03.2022)	Claimed for True Up	Approved (T.O. dt. 30.03.2023)	Revised Estimates	Approved (T.O. dt. 31.03.2022)	Proposed
1	Depreciation	93.12	103.05	93.83	116.75	119.55	126.94
2	Interest on Long Term Loans	57.43	47.49	48.55	51.59	74.71	52.98
3	Return on Equity	48.42	65.97	53.59	78.12	72.58	87.17
4	O&M Expenses	184.89	202.93	197.23	216.81	227.99	246.92
5	Interest on Working Capital	9.85	11.08	11.86	13.19	13.57	19.10
6	Income Tax	-	3.25	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7	Gross Expenditure	393.71	433.77	405.06	476.45	508.40	533.11
8	Add: True-Up of Previous Years	(55.00)	(55.00)	(16.54)	(16.54)	-	87.22
9	Less: Non-Tariff Income	15.00	(0.05)	15.00	6.73	15.00	6.73
10	Less: Sharing of Incentive due to higher availability	-	1.17	-	-	-	-
11	Less: Revenue from short term open access	2.44	2.69	2.57	5.16	2.44	5.16
12	Less: Revenue from Natural ISTS	1.16	1.16	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20
13	Less: SLDC Charges	15.82	0.00	15.52	-	33.66	-
14	Net ARR	304.29	373.80	354.23	446.81	456.40	607.24
15	Revenue Gap/(Surplus) for the year after Truing Up	-	69.51	-	-	-	-
16	Provision for RoE on Initial Equity	-	-	-	-	-	300.42
17	Provision for RoE on equity contribution by GoU through PDF	-	-	-	-	-	573.21

2. PTCUL has proposed a total increase of 71.42% for FY 2024-25 (which includes the truing up impact of FY 2022-23 alongwith the carrying cost on the same) over the approved transmission charges for FY 2023-24. In addition, PTCUL has also claimed Rs. 873.63 Crore on account of Return on Equity on Initial Equity and Equity contributed by the Government of Uttarakhand through PDF and considering this claim, the total increase works out to 318%. In case, the entire claim of PTCUL including that of RoE on initial equity and equity contributed through PDF is also accepted by the Commission, an additional increase of 10.36% in consumer tariff shall be required over and above the hike proposed by UPCL.

3. Detailed proposal can be seen free of cost on any working day at the Commission's office or at the office of the Managing Director, Power Transmission Corporation of Uttarakhand Limited, Vidut Bhawan, Saharanpur Road, Majra, Near ISBT, Dehradun-248001, Uttarakhand. Relevant extracts can also be obtained from the above-mentioned office of the Petitioner.

4. The proposal is also available at the website of the Commission (www.uer.gov.in) and at PTCUL's website (www.ptcul.org).

5. Objections/suggestions are invited from the consumers and other stakeholders on the above proposals. These may be sent to the Secretary, Uttarakhand Electricity Regulatory Commission, either in person or by post at 'Vidut Niyamak Bhawan', Near I.S.B.T., P.O. Majra, Dehradun-248171 or through e-mail to secy.uer@gov.in as a statement of objections or comments with copies of the documents and evidence in support thereof so as to reach the Secretary by 31.01.2024.

RO No.: 1698/HQP/PTCUL Dated: 29.12.2023 Managing Director

"Save Electricity in the Interest of Nation"

Tackling stubble: Biodecomposer sprayed over 4k acres for ₹75 lakh

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Delhi government has spent over Rs 75 lakh for spraying the biodecomposer, which was developed at Indian Agricultural Research Institute, as an in situ management of stubble in the city this harvest season. This was shared by the environment department in reply to a question raised in the Delhi Assembly.

For the current harvest season, the biodecomposer was sprayed over 4,189 acres of area, which cost Rs 75.6 lakh and benefitted 560 farmers. This translates to Rs 1,805 spent per acre and Rs 13,508 per farmer. In 2022-2023, a total of 4,329 acres were covered, which benefitted 576 farmers and cost Rs 81.3 lakh. In 2021-22, Rs 49.2 lakh was spent, which benefitted 519 farmers

and covered an area of 4,140 acres. The previous year, Rs 25.7 lakh was spent, which benefitted 310 farmers and covered an area of 1,935 acres.

The department further stated that it did not spend any money on advertisements related to spraying of the biodecomposer.

The biodecomposer comes in the powder or capsule form which has to be mixed with water to form a solution and then sprayed on the paddy stubble. This leads to a chain reaction which decomposes the stubble into manure, and thus controls the instances of stubble burning. Many farmers find it to be a weak and tedious solution, as it takes over three weeks to manage the stubble. Scientists, however, said that they were working on an advance formula to cut this down to less than a week.

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
e-TENDER NOTICE
Tenders are invited from reputed firms for the Works abridged NIT No. 01(2) Call (Equipment) of 23-24 related to Physiotherapy Equipment for RH and BPHC Geriatric Care under NPHCE under Malda district. Last date & time of bid submission 16.01.2024 at 02.00 PM for details visit www.wbtdenders.gov.in Sd/- Secretary DH&FWS & CMOH, Malda ICA- 126810(4)/2023

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
CORRIGENDUM
NIT No: WBHD/EE/FED/IL-NIT-08/23-24. Tender ID: 2023_HSD_617851_1. Name of work: "Construction of 64 one BHK flats in 4 Blocks and 64 2 BHK in 4 Blocks at Bishnupur in the District of Bankura, No. 101 Dug No. 2264, 2265, 2266, 1403 under Nijashree Housing Scheme... For 2 BHK 32 Flats Internal Electrification, IL, Compound light & SITC of Sign Board" under Electrical Division No-II, P.D. Bid Submission end date: 28.12.2023 up to 5 P.M, Tender Opening Date: 01.01.24 at 9 A.M. Treated as New Bid Submission End date 09.01.24 at 2 P.M, Tender Opening Date: 11.01.24 at 3 P.M, Tender details may be obtained from the Office of the Executive Engineer, Electrical Division No. II, Housing Directorate, 67, Bentineck Street, Kolkata 700069 on all office days during office hours. ICA- 126820(3)/2023

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL
SUPERINTENDENT-CUM-VICE PRINCIPAL
NORTH BENGAL MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
SUSHRUTANAGAR, DARJEELING
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
NO. NBMC/H/7735 Date 13/12/23
E-Tender is invited for Disposal of condemned items 3" call for Office of the M.S.V.P., North Bengal Medical College & Hospital. For tender details, forms may be downloaded from <https://wbhealth.gov.in> or <https://www.wbtdenders.gov.in> Technical & Financial Bid Submission Closing Date: 15/01/2024 at 5:00 PM. For Detail, Please visit the website www.nbmcch.org or the Office of the MSPV, North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, Sushrutnagar, Darjeeling. ICA- 126809(4)/2023

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL
SUPERINTENDENT-CUM-VICE PRINCIPAL
NORTH BENGAL MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
SUSHRUTANAGAR, DARJEELING
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
NO. NBMC/H/7804 Date 19/12/23
E-Tender is invited for Procurement of RT PCR Kit Dengue Serotyping (2 x 250 tests) 2" call for Office of the M.S.V.P., North Bengal Medical College & Hospital. For tender details, forms may be downloaded from <https://wbhealth.gov.in> or <https://www.wbtdenders.gov.in> Technical & Financial Bid Submission Closing Date: 17/01/2024 at 5:00 PM. For Detail, Please visit the website www.nbmcch.org or the Office of the MSPV, North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, Sushrutnagar, Darjeeling. ICA- 126809(4)/2023

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Corrigendum No.1
Dated 27.12.2023
GeM Bid Number: GEM/2023/B/4384391
Date: 22.12.2023
Bid End Date/Time-12-01-2024, 14:30:00
First Corrigendum
In reference to above GEM Bid, Corrigendum-1 for Technical eligibility criteria under Para 2.6.1.3 has been uploaded on GeM website www.Gem.gov.in. Kindly visit for details of corrigendum-1 on GeM/Bid No. GEM/2023/B/4384391 published at GeM website www.Gem.gov.in 2098(23/K) www.ncrindianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

GOVERNMENT OF WEST BENGAL
OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL
SUPERINTENDENT-CUM-VICE PRINCIPAL
NORTH BENGAL MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL
SUSHRUTANAGAR, DARJEELING
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
NO. NBMC/H/7735 Date 13/12/23
E-Tender is invited for Disposal of condemned items 3" call for Office of the M.S.V.P., North Bengal Medical College & Hospital. For tender details, forms may be downloaded from <https://wbhealth.gov.in> or <https://www.wbtdenders.gov.in> Technical & Financial Bid Submission Closing Date: 15/01/2024 at 5:00 PM. For Detail, Please visit the website www.nbmcch.org or the Office of the MSPV, North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, Sushrutnagar, Darjeeling. ICA- 126809(3)/2023

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
Corrigendum No.1
First Corrigendum to Tender notice no. JHS-ENGGE-E-2023-174
It is notified that the following corrections are made in the tender invited by Divisional Railway Manager (Works) North Central Railway, Jhansi vide Tender Notice no. JHS-ENGGE-E-2023-174 dt. 14.12.2023, which is due to be opened on 12.01.2024, the following correction is being made-
Existing Tender Description of work: Pre and Post tamping track measurement survey using Trimble Gode Vorsys trolley system in JHS-MKP & KID-BZM section under ADEN/MBM's jurisdiction. Modified Tender Description of work: Pre and Post tamping track measurement survey using Trimble Gode Vorsys trolley system in JHS-MKP, MBA-KURJ & LAR-KURJ section under ADEN/MBM's jurisdiction. Other terms and conditions of the original tender notification shall remain unchanged. 2042(23/K) www.ncrindianrailways.gov.in @CPRONCR

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY
E-Tender Notice
TENDER NOTICE No. AGC-ELG-T-35-2023-24 Date: 29.12.2023
Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer (General) N.C. Railway, Agra on behalf of President of India invites "Open Tender" through on line only (E-Tendering) for the following works.
Sr.No.1. Tender No.: AGC-ELG-T-35-2023-24, Name of work with its location & completion period: Electrification work of RGM siding along with construction of pathway, approach road and rest house for track machine staff at old ballast siding at Billochpura. Completion period of 06 months.
2. Approx. Cost of the work: 916704.50. For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.ireps.gov.in. Tenders can only be submitted through web portal www.ireps.gov.in up to 15.00 hrs. on 19.01.2024. 2133(23/FA

S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER
e-Tender Notice No.: TRD-RNC-23-24-32, Dated: 28.12.2023, Sr. Div. Electrical Engineer (TRD), South Eastern Railway, Ranchi for & on behalf of President of India, invites e-Tender for the following work:
Brief Description of work: Repairing of damaged/cracked muffs over Ranchi division. Approx cost of work: ₹ 1,37,19,200.62. EMD/Bid security: ₹ 2,18,600. Date & Time of closing: 23.01.2024 at 15.00 hrs. The tender details can be viewed at the website <http://www.ireps.gov.in>. The tenderers/bidders must have Class-III Digital Signature Certificate and must be registered on IREPS portal. Only registered tenderers/bidders can participate on e-Tendering. All relevant papers must be uploaded by tenderer with tender document at the time of participating in e-tendering. (PR-976)

e-Tender & Corrigendum Notice
e-Tender is published on 30.12.2023 for the Post Five Years Maintenance Works vide e-NIT No. 25 of 2023-24, (ID: 2023_PRD_634510_1 to 3) under Coochbehar District & 1st Corrigendum is also published on 30.12.2023 for e-NIT No. 21 of 2023-24, (ID: 2023_PRD_629304_1 to 3) & e-NIT No. 22 of 2023-24, (ID: 2023_PRD_629782_1 to 2) respectively under Coochbehar District. All details may be had from this office Notice Board and in website: <https://wbtdenders.gov.in>, www.wbprd.gov.in

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Reference- 1. ASHF file no. ASHF-ACCT/34/2021-03/30685 Dt- 28.12.2023.
2. E-Procurement Notice for Insurance of livestock under NLM issued vide no. DSHK/ACcts/2023-24/6361-70 Dt- 21.10.2023.
The e-NIT for Insurance of livestock under NLM issued vide no. DSHK/ACcts/2023-24/6361-70 Dt- 21.10.2023 as per above reference is hereby cancelled.

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Abridged Notice Inviting e-Tender
E-tenders with following tender Ids for supply, installation & commissioning of equipment/ instrument/ Machinery etc. related to laboratories/ workshops of Engg/ Tech disciplines for 9 Govt Polytechnics across the State are hereby invited by the respective Principals/ Principals-in-Charge from eligible manufacturers/ distributors/ dealers: 1. Engineering Institute for Junior Executives: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_614471. 2. Gayeshpur Govt. Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_612359. 3. Medinipur Sadar Govt. Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_618153. 4. Iswar Chandra Vidyaasagar Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_622026, 2023_DTET_622053, 2023_DTET_622058, 2023_DTET_622063, 2023_DTET_622069. 5. Bankura Govt. Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_623789. 6. Tufanganj Government Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_622124. 7. Central Calcutta Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_618597. 8. Central Footwear Training Centre: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_625585. 9. Jnan Chandra Ghosh Polytechnic: Tender ID: 2023_DTET_626541. Detailed NIT along with list of instruments with specifications, critical dates and the BOQ template for submission of digitally signed online bids will be available at <https://wbtdenders.gov.in> Corrigendum and addendum, if any, will only be available in that website. Sd/- Principals/ Principals-in-charge, Govt Polytechnics ICA- 126811(3)/2023

Desealing: Traders meet mayor Oberoi

New Delhi: Delhi traders met mayor Shelly Oberoi on Saturday regarding the de-sealing of shops.

"Shops in nine big markets that were sealed six years ago will open soon. The mayor has assured us that SOP will be made in collaboration with MCD officials in the next five days. MCD will de-seal the shops after completing all the paperwork within a month," said Chamber of Trade and Industry chairman Brijesh Goyal.

Sealing was done six years ago in the Amar Colony, Defense Colony, Green Park, Hauz Khas, South Ex, Greater Kailash, and Rajendra Nagar markets.

Earlier, on October 20, the monitoring committee of the MCD had ordered the de-sealing of 392 shops in Lajpat Nagar ahead of Diwali and the ongoing Durga Puja celebrations. ANI

A close friend broke your trust? Navigating it might be tricky

To help readers cope with their anxieties in these stressful times, TOI has launched *Talk it Out*, a series in which expert counsellors answer your mental health queries. This week's advice is from counselling psychologist **Dr Sukhmani Pal**

■ A very close friend of mine of almost thirty years made an unsolicited pass towards my wife a month back. My wife was too shocked and horrified to react and it took two days for her to open up about this. She didn't confide in me due to my relations with my friend. Instead, she confided in our children and upon their advice told me about it. At first both of us were in denial as we couldn't believe my friend could do this. I absolutely trust my wife and know that she would not have done anything to let my friend think of doing something like this. This incident has disturbed us both immensely. We have a common friend circle and I love my friend's wife like a sister. We both decided not to reveal this to anyone in our circle as it would break our relations with all my friends. We have stopped interacting with my friends and this has led to questions. My friend subsequently has profusely apologised and thanked me for not informing anyone, especially his wife. Should we both forgive him and move on?

— Anonymous

Instances of unwarranted sexual advances, especially by known people can not only be traumatic but also be a huge breach of trust. Navigating this situation would require you to have open and honest discussions with your wife. Forgiveness doesn't mean having to be around the person. You will have to ask her if she is even comfortable around this friend? Will she be able to be herself in social situations if this friend is around? While I understand that your situation with friends is bothersome, you will have to prioritise what's more important. Hence,



WANT SOME ADVICE?

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You can also visit bit.ly/TOITalkitOut or scan this QR code to send in your concern.



lying to her family about her college timings and is wasting her time with that boy instead of focusing on her education. I don't know how to confront her or what to say to her but I also don't want her to ruin her future. I would appreciate your guidance on how to handle this situation. How can I talk to her in a respectful and supportive way? How can I make her realise the consequences of her actions? Should inform her parents or not?

— Anonymous

the best way forward is to have an open discussion with your wife and understand her feelings about the situation and then decide on an amicable solution.

■ My 35-year old daughter is a highly educated and smart girl who has worked in different multinational companies. However, she has avoided marriage since the age of 25. She was getting many good proposals, but did not agree. She was/is not in any relationship. Now at this age, she is perturbed that she did not get married. She is now blaming her parents for all this. She has left her job as well and is sitting at home, totally frustrated. She blames her parents the whole day and does nothing. What can I do?

— Anonymous

Your daughter is disappointed that life is not what she imagined or expected it to be because when we imagine life to be a certain way and it doesn't turn out to be, we feel dejected, hurt and hopeless. You have to understand her feelings and provide her with the support she needs. Slowly get her to get out of the house and involve her in various activities. Encourage her to go out with her friends or go out for a meal. Get her to try some hobbies so that she learns to enjoy life alone. Being unmarried at 35 is not the end of the world and you will constantly need to remind her of that. Life can be enjoyed and lived without being married as well. Lastly, encourage her to take counseling as that will help her process all the negative feelings she has pent up.

■ I am writing to you to seek your advice on how to deal with a difficult situation involving my cousin sister. She is 18 years old. I am very concerned about her studies and her attraction towards her college boyfriend. I have observed that she has been hugging him in public and even the boy is forcefully getting intimate with her, which I find inappropriate and disrespectful to our family values. She has also been

If you believe her boyfriend is getting forceful with her, you definitely need to have a conversation with her. Consent is non-negotiable and not to be taken lightly. Sometimes, young girls may not fully understand how wanting to be with a partner can come at the cost of their autonomy and respect. You need to speak to her about your observations, talk about consent and its importance. Showing her the respect she deserves is important, therefore, going behind her back to tell her parents would not be appropriate. As far as her studies are concerned, at this age it is very common and normal to engage in relationships. It's a regular phase of life and you can not force her not to date or be in relationships. However, reminding her of what a healthy relationship with mutual consent looks like will be paramount to her growth as an individual.

■ I am a 25-year-old man. I am lazy and an overthinker. I have been suffering from obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) since the 10th standard. Medication did not help. I study a lot but cannot concentrate on it. How can I improve my life? My father is an alcoholic which also gives me stress. How can I overcome depression and OCD?

— Anonymous

When it comes to OCD, one has to constantly be in therapy along with some or the other form of medication. OCD is rooted in biological and psychological causes and it needs to be dealt with keeping both in sync. For patience and overthinking, you can try to set your goals on a daily basis. So instead of thinking of long term or even weekly goals, think about what you want to get done in a day and keep that goal realistic. For patience, practice mindfulness and try different breathing exercises. Overall, incorporating small changes in your daily life will help you go a long way in managing your impatience and overthinking along with OCD.

MCD holds 60 drives, demolishes 111 illegal structures in December

Siddhanta Mishra
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: In the last month of the year, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has intensified its efforts to demolish illegal construction. While anti-encroachment drives have been carried out across the national capital, the main focus areas have been South, Narela, Shahdara and City SP zones.

As per data provided by MCD, between December 1 and 30, at least 111 illegal structures were demolished in different zones across the city. A total of 60 demolition drives were held. Shahdara North and South, followed by Narela and South witnessed maximum such drives.

In November, demolition drives could not be carried out because of the construction and demolition ban. However, in December, the areas identified in the previous month and this month both were covered.

"The field staff of MCD is paying special attention in taking action against illegal construction. The corporation has also filed prosecutions against builders carrying out illegal construction. We appeal to the people of Delhi not to fall into the trap of unscrupulous builders who cheat people in the name of cheap houses and plots," said an official.

In South Delhi, MCD demolished illegal structures in areas of Aya Nagar, Bhati, Chhatrapur, Mehrauli, Neb Sarai,

Green Park among others.

In the City SP zone, which pertains to areas mostly inside the Walled City, Chandni Chowk, Sadar Bazar, Inderlok and Majnu ka Tila were covered. During the anti-encroachment drives, the corporation removed shops, walls, and illegal structures. After the latest visit by LG VK Saxena, the corporation also carried out several encroachment removal drives on the main redeveloped road at Chandni Chowk this month.

In East Delhi, which has several unauthorised colonies, the corporation covered both Shahdara North and South zones. It demolished illegal plotting in Trilokpur and also removed temporary en-

croachments by vendors on roads. According to officials, MCD, Delhi Development Authority and local police also jointly demolished the illegal plots created on agricultural land in Swaroop Nagar of Civil Lines this month.

In Narela zone, MCD stopped construction of illegal plots in Mundka, Bakhtawarpur, Alipur and adjoining areas. According to officials, these were mostly agricultural land.

Usually, as per the procedure, a joint special task force carries out such demolitions across the city. PWD is also part of the special task force, which has been created by the government to remove encroachments on roads and government land.

Man kills mom during fight over drugs

Advitya Bahl@timesgroup.com

Ghaziabad: A 24-year-old youth addicted to drugs allegedly killed his mother after a fight with her for money to buy intoxicants at their house in Ghaziabad's Aman Garden area on Friday night, police said.

ACP Loni Suryabali Maurya said the man, Shahrukh, walked to the Loni police station and submitted a complaint after murdering his 65-year-old mother Dilshad Begam. "On Saturday, around 5am, Shahrukh reached the police station and said his mother had been killed. A police team found the woman in a pool of blood with several stab wounds at their residents in Ashok Vihar colony. The body was sent for autopsy," the ACP said.

During the probe, Shahrukh told the interrogators that he had a scuffle with Begum as she refused to give him money to buy drugs. "When she went to sleep in her room, he stabbed her with a dag knife several times. He then tried to clean up the blood-soaked floor and reached the police station to file a complaint."

A case on charges of murder was registered and Shahrukh was arrested. Loni SHO Anil Rajpoot said.

Vaping and Lung Health: Unmasking the Dangers of E-cigarettes



Dr. Devavrat Arya
Director - Medical Oncology
Delhi

and its impact on the respiratory system.

The Rise of Vaping

E-cigarettes were initially introduced as a smoking cessation aid, designed to help traditional smokers quit or reduce their tobacco consumption. They work by heating a liquid solution, typically containing nicotine, into an aerosol that users inhale. Unlike conventional cigarettes, e-cigarettes do not involve burning tobacco, which produces harmful tar and numerous toxic compounds.

Nicotine Addiction and Lung Function - While e-cigarettes may lack tobacco's tar, they often contain nicotine, an addictive substance that poses its own set of risks. Nicotine is known to constrict blood vessels and raise blood pressure, which can strain the cardiovascular system. Moreover, nicotine addiction can lead users to increase their vaping frequency, thus exposing their lungs to more potential harm.

Chemical Composition of E-cigarette Aerosols - E-cigarette aerosols, commonly referred to as "vapor," are not harmless water vapor, as some marketing suggests. They consist of various chemicals, including propylene glycol, glycerin, and flavorings, which are generally recognized as safe when ingested but not necessarily when inhaled into the lungs. Additionally, studies have identified potentially harmful substances like formaldehyde and acetaldehyde in e-cigarette aerosols, especially at high temperatures.

E-cigarette-Associated Lung Injury (EVALI) - In 2019, a new and alarming issue emerged, known as E-cigarette-Associated Lung Injury (EVALI). Hundreds of cases were reported, with symptoms including severe respiratory distress, coughing, chest pain, and in some cases, fatalities. While EVALI was primarily associated with vaping of THC-containing products obtained from unregulated sources, it highlighted the unpredictability and potential hazards of vaping.

Vaping and Lung Inflammation

Research indicates that vaping can lead to lung inflammation, a significant concern for respiratory health. Inhalation of e-cigarette aerosols can trigger an immune response in the lungs, causing inflammation that may

contribute to lung damage over time. Chronic lung inflammation is a risk factor for respiratory diseases like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and can exacerbate pre-existing conditions like asthma.

Popcorn Lung and Flavorings - One concerning aspect of e-cigarette use is the wide range of flavored liquids available. Many of these flavorings contain chemicals that, when heated and inhaled, can have adverse effects on the respiratory system. For instance, a chemical called diacetyl, used in some e-cigarette flavorings, has been linked to a condition known as "popcorn lung" or bronchiolitis obliterans. This rare but serious lung disease causes scarring and narrowing of the airways, leading to breathing difficulties.

Youth Vaping Epidemic

E-cigarettes have seen a sharp rise in popularity among youth, which is particularly troubling. The attractive flavors and discreet designs of vaping devices have made them appealing to adolescents. The developing adolescent brain is highly susceptible to nicotine addiction, and early exposure to nicotine can lead to a lifelong addiction and negatively impact brain development.

Future Health Implications - While the long-term health effects of vaping are still being studied, there is growing concern about the potential for e-cigarettes to contribute to the development of chronic lung diseases and other respiratory problems. Emerging research suggests that vaping may increase the risk of conditions like bronchitis, pneumonia, and worsen asthma symptoms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the narrative surrounding e-cigarettes as a safer alternative to traditional smoking is gradually shifting. While they may indeed expose users to fewer harmful compounds than conventional cigarettes, they are not without risks, particularly concerning lung health. Nicotine addiction, potential lung inflammation, exposure to harmful chemicals, and the emergence of EVALI are all sobering reminders of the dangers associated with vaping. It is essential for individuals, especially young people, to be informed about the potential risks of e-cigarette use. Public health campaigns should continue to educate the public about the hazards of vaping, and regulations should be in place to ensure the safety of these products. As the research into vaping and lung health continues, it is vital that both policymakers and individuals remain vigilant about the evolving landscape of e-cigarette use and its impact on respiratory health.

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10 int'l airlines under DGGI scanner over tax evasion

Execs Quizzed Over Expenditure Related To Carriers' India Operations

Pradeep.Thakur
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: The Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) has questioned executives from at least 10 leading foreign airlines during the last one month in an ongoing investigation related to alleged tax evasion, running into hundreds of crores of rupees, by these carriers for booking expenditure related to their India operations with their overseas head offices.

Finance managers of half-a-dozen airlines, including British Airways, Etihad, Thai Airways and Qatar Airways, have recorded their statements with DGGI. These executives are responsible for accounting and tax compliance issues related to their operations in India.

Prominent among those



Finance managers of airlines including British Airways, Etihad, Thai Airways and Qatar Airways have recorded their statements with DGGI

who have not yet appeared despite pending summons include Lufthansa, Emirates, Oman Airlines and Singapore Airlines. A few airlines, including Emirates, have been given a fresh date to appear for questioning, while a few others have sought more time as they are still in the process of gathering the required information from their headquarters.

Singapore Airlines officers have so far not appeared for questioning, although summons issued to the airline have been pending for few

months, sources told TOI. It's been asked to submit records of expenditure booked on its India-related operations.

In October, DGGI had carried out a series of searches on India offices of at least half-a-dozen foreign airlines to ascertain their tax liability. The action resulted in these carriers seeking fresh dates for submitting the required information by their overseas head offices.

According to sources, DGGI has asked these airlines to produce documents related to all expenditure booked by

the foreign carriers with regard to their expenditure on India operations, which may include leasing of aircraft, expenditure of crew members, ground staff, airline fuel and any other spending on maintenance or repair.

This is for the first time that Indian authorities have asked foreign airlines to account for their India-related expenditure and pay tax for services rendered here under the new GST regime. This expenditure runs into millions of dollars for foreign carriers and shipping liners engaged in business activities in India.

The new GST regime treats Indian subsidiaries of any foreign company as two separate entities, and the former needs to comply with the tax rules applicable to any other company in India.

Militants gun down village guard in Imphal West

K Sarojkumar Sharma | TNN

Imphal: Suspected militants shot and killed a village guard at Kadangband Part II area in Manipur's Imphal West district around 3.30am on Saturday, police said. The deceased, identified as 31-year-old Nongbam Jamesbond, was guarding the village with other volunteers when he was fatally shot from a nearby hill.

The attack came 26 days after 13 men were killed in Tengnoupal, bordering Myanmar.

"We have been spending sleepless nights here since the ethnic clashes broke out. Today's attack happened despite the presence of Assam Rifles, CRPF and some state forces," a Kadangband Meira Paibi (woman vigilante) leader said. Kadangband, on the fringes of Imphal West district, shares a boundary with Kangpokpi district that has been recording violence since May 3.

Locals said Jamesbond was a sports journalist with a vernacular daily, Naharolgi Thoudang, some time ago. CM N Biren Singh condemned the killing. "The matter is under probe and combing operation is on to nab culprits," he said.

'Pregnant Job Agency' Busted In Bihar, 8 Arrested

Fertile prospect: Impregnate childless women, rake in ₹13L

S B Sinha | TNN

Nawada: Cyber frauds often conceive innovative ideas to swindle people, but a gang in Bihar took their fertile imagination to another level. Believe it or not, they were running 'All India Pregnant Job Agency' in Nawada district. The job was to make women pregnant and the 'payment' offered was handsome — a proposition lucrative enough for many to fall for the trap.

On Friday, cops busted the gang and arrested eight persons, who lured gullible people to deposit a small amount of Rs 799 as registration fee and avail a chance to get handsome returns of Rs 13 lakh on successfully making pregnant such women who have been unable to bear a child.

However, police said the kingpin of the racket, Munna

The gang reached people on WhatsApp seeking help in impregnating 'unfortunate' women who were unable to conceive. Photos of women were sent to them to select which one they desired to impregnate. They were then asked to deposit a security, ranging between ₹5,000 and ₹20,000

Kumar, managed to escape.

The modus operandi, according to the DSP, was to contact gullible people on their WhatsApp numbers, seeking help in impregnating "unfortunate" women who were unable to conceive from their respective husbands or live-in partners.

Those desirous to help such women in distress were asked to first register themselves by paying a fee Rs 799. Once registered, they were told that photos of several women would be sent to them to select which one they desired to impregnate.

Once the choice was made, the person was asked to make a "security deposit", with the amount ranging between Rs 5,000 and Rs 20,000. The prettier the woman, the higher the amount, the DSP added.

The cyber thugs assured the men that after successful conception, they would be paid the "prize money" of Rs 13 lakh. Even if unsuccessful, they were assured of a "consolation prize" of Rs 5 lakh, to be credited to their bank accounts, police said.

Police seized nine mobile phones, 2 printers and several data sheets from the accused.

Amid Nijjar row, India declares Canada-based goon 'terrorist'

New Delhi: The ministry of home affairs has designated Canada-based gangster Lakhbir Singh Landha as a terrorist.

The move comes amid continuing strain in diplomatic ties between New Delhi and Ottawa over PM Justin Trudeau's claim earlier of Indian involvement in the killing of wanted Khalistani terrorist Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil.

According to an official release by MHA, 34-year-old Landha, son of Niranjan Singh and Parminder Kaur, has a permanent residence at VP0 Harike in the Tarn Taran district of Punjab, bordering Pakistan.

Under the UAPA Mt. 1967 (37 of 1967), "Clause (a) of sub-section (1) and sub-section (2) of section 35 of the said Act empowers the central government to add the name of an individual in the Fourth Schedule to the said Act if it believes that he is involved in terrorism," MHA said on Friday.

Landha currently resides in Edmonton, capital of Alberta in Canada, and is a member of Babbar Khalsa International.

According to MHA, Babbar Khalsa International is listed as a terrorist organisation as per "number 1 of the First Schedule to the said Act."

Landha was backed by the cross-border agency and was involved in the terror attack through a shoulder-mounted rocket-propelled grenade on the building of Punjab's State Intelligence Headquarters at Mohali, MHA added. He was also "involved in the supply of IEDs, arms, sophisticated weapons, and explosives from across the border to various modules for carrying out terrorist activities in Punjab", according to the MHA release.

Landha was also involved in criminal cases related to raising of terror modules, extortion and killings, planting IEDs, smuggling weapons and narcotics and using funds or proceeds thereof for terrorist acts in the Punjab and other parts of the country, MHA added. ANI

Ahead of polls, BJP candidate takes oath as minister in Raj

ShoebKhan@timesgroup.com

Jaipur: Rajasthan CM Bhanu Lal Sharma formed his cabinet on Saturday as 22 ministers took the oath of office at Raj Bhavan in Jaipur, with notable inclusion of Sawai Madhopur MLA Kirori Lal Meena, Jhotwara MLA Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore, and Surendra Pal Singh TT, the BJP candidate for Karanpur assembly seat where polling was postponed because of the death of the Congress nominee.

TT was appointed as a junior minister with independent charge. His elevation ahead of the January 5 polls in Karanpur drew criticism from Congress, accusing BJP of violating the model code of conduct, with former CM Ashok Gehlot tweeting that it's "an attempt to influence the voters there".

"The party in power has



Jhotwara MLA Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore took the oath of office in Jaipur on Saturday

disregarded the MCC... Congress plans to file a complaint with the ED against this violation," the party's state chief Govind Singh Dotsra said. BJP dismissed the accusations. The election result will be announced on January 8.

As Congress nominee Rupinder Singh Kooner, son

of the deceased candidate and the sitting MLA, is anticipated to receive sympathy votes, the move to elevate TT even before his election is seen as a strategy to convey to voters that the constituency will have representation in the council of ministers if BJP candidate emerges victorious, sources said.

Of the 22 ministers sworn in, 12 received cabinet berths, five were appointed as MoS with independent charge, and five as MoS. The cabinet has one woman, Jayal MLA Dr Manju Bagmar, who took oath as an MoS. The total count of ministers, including the CM and deputies, now stands at 25.

For the first time, the state's council of ministers doesn't include any Muslim members, as the BJP didn't field any candidate from the community in the November 25 assembly elections.

Govt issues 'draft rule' for ease of rail travel for disabled passengers

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In a move to ensure railway stations and trains are accessible to people with disabilities (divyangs), Centre has issued a "draft rule" to include the guidelines issued by the Railway Board. Once these guidelines become part of the rules, these can be enforced for the benefit of such people.

The department of people with disabilities (PwDs) has sought feedback from stakeholders and the public by January 29 on the proposed rules to create a more user-friendly environment. The Railway Board had come up with detailed guidelines on accessibility of stations and facilities at stations for differently abled persons and passengers with re-

duced mobility in November. The guidelines highlight the need for dedicated website features catering to the Divyangs, ensuring a flexible and accessible interface design. These features will follow universal design principles and World Wide Web Consortium guidelines, integrating technology-enabled accessibility features such as text-to-speech and user-friendly pictograms.

The guidelines issued by the railways includes the development of a dedicated mobile app and a one-click template for people with disabilities displaying all the information and facilities available for them at stations as well as in trains. For in-

clusivity, credible announcements regarding facilities for PwDs will be integrated into public announcement systems at train stations and platforms. This includes sign language, captioning, and digital displays.

As per guidelines, standardised illuminated signage across stations, coupled with Braille signage, has been proposed. Frontline staff will be trained in sign language to ensure effective communication. The guidelines call for accessible entry and exit points, ramps and handrails.

These also have provision for low-height ticket counters with accessibility signage and accessible help booths manned by 'Divyangjan Sahayaks' have been proposed to enhance the overall accessibility experience.

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Email : establishment-coa@gov.in, Web : www.coa.gov.in

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FOR NATA TEST CENTRES FOR NATA 2024 EXAMINATION

Council of Architecture invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from Institutions with at least 5 years of establishment and approved by COA/ UGC/ AICTE, for registration as test centres for NATA 2024. The interested institutions may apply to COA in the prescribed format on or before **01.02.2024** at email "coa.nata2024@gmail.com" and also by hard copy at the office of the Council of Architecture, India Habitat Centre, Core 6A, 1st Floor, Lodhi Road, New Delhi -110003. NATA 2024 is proposed to be conducted as a comprehensive Aptitude Test consisting of Part - A (Drawing and Composition) as offline test and Part - B (MCQ) as a computer based test on all Saturdays starting from April to July, 2024 in two sessions on an all-India basis and also at select international cities.

For details on requirements of Test Centre and format of EOI, institutions may refer to "NATA Test Manual" available at Council's website www.coa.gov.in. The last date of receipt for EOI in all respect shall be upto **15 Hours of 01.02.2024**.

New Delhi
December 31, 2023
Registrar

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TENDER NOTICE FOR NATA 2024 EXAMINATION

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For Tender document & details, please visit "Tenders" link at Council's website www.coa.gov.in. The last date of receipt for Sealed Tenders complete in all respect is upto **15 Hours of January 22, 2024**.

New Delhi
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The allotment procedure for eligible candidates for 6 months Ultra-Sound Course under PCPNDT Rules 2014 in Govt. Medical Colleges will start from 30.12.2023 as per the detailed notification available at the website <https://www.rajpgnet2023.com>

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MP CM keeps home, housing for Vijayvargiya

Dy CMs Devda And Shukla Get Finance, Health

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Bhopal: Six days after his 28 ministers were sworn in, MP CM Moan Yadav allocated portfolios to them late Saturday, retaining home, PR, industrial policy and mining with himself.

Finance was entrusted to deputy CM Jagdish Devda, who held the same job in the Shivraj cabinet. The other deputy CM, Rajendra Shukla, was allocated health.

Tulsi Silawat was given water resources and Pradyuman Singh Tomar energy. Both are supporters of Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia.

They were part of the Shivraj cabinet with the same portfolios. Govind Singh Rajput, another Scindia supporter who held revenue and transport earlier, was entrusted with food, civil supplies and consumer protection.

Former BJP general secretary and senior leader Kailash Vijayvargiya was given urban

Prahlad Patel, earlier a Union minister, was given panchayat and rural development, while former BJP state chief Rakesh Singh was allocated public works

administration and housing, besides legislative affairs.

CM Yadav has done a balancing act by giving some important portfolios to senior and experienced members and in doing so, has also kept in mind the regional balance.

Among MPs who became MLAs and then state ministers, Prahlad Patel — earlier a Union minister — was allocated panchayat and rural development. Former BJP state chief Rakesh Singh was given public works. Another of the MPs, Uday Pratap Singh, was entrusted with school education and transport.

Bhopal MLA Vishvas Sarang, who was medical education minister in the Chouhan dispensation, has got sports and youth welfare. Govindpura MLA Krishna Gaur was given the departments of OBC and minority welfare.

On SC nudge, TN CM & gov hold 40-min talks on critical issues

Chennai: In an exercise meant to break ice and heed to the Supreme Court direction to sort out their issue over a cuppa, Tamil Nadu governor RN Ravi and chief minister MK Stalin discussed the affairs of the state government, including various contentious matters, during a 40-minute interaction at the Raj Bhavan on Saturday.

Indicating to the governor that his "action" was "unnecessary" and "nowhere mentioned in the Constitution", Stalin urged him to recall the 10 bills that he had reserved for the consideration of the President and give his quick assent.

The 10 bills that were readopted by the state legislature empower the state government to appoint the vice-chancellors of state-run universities.

Governor Ravi reiterated "his total commitment to the good of the people of Tamil Nadu and assured his continuing support to the state government within the bounds of the Constitution of India".

"The CM urged the governor to act as per the provisions of the Constitution. Only then will the governor's actions be beneficial to the welfare of the people of the state and the administration," a government release said. **TNN**

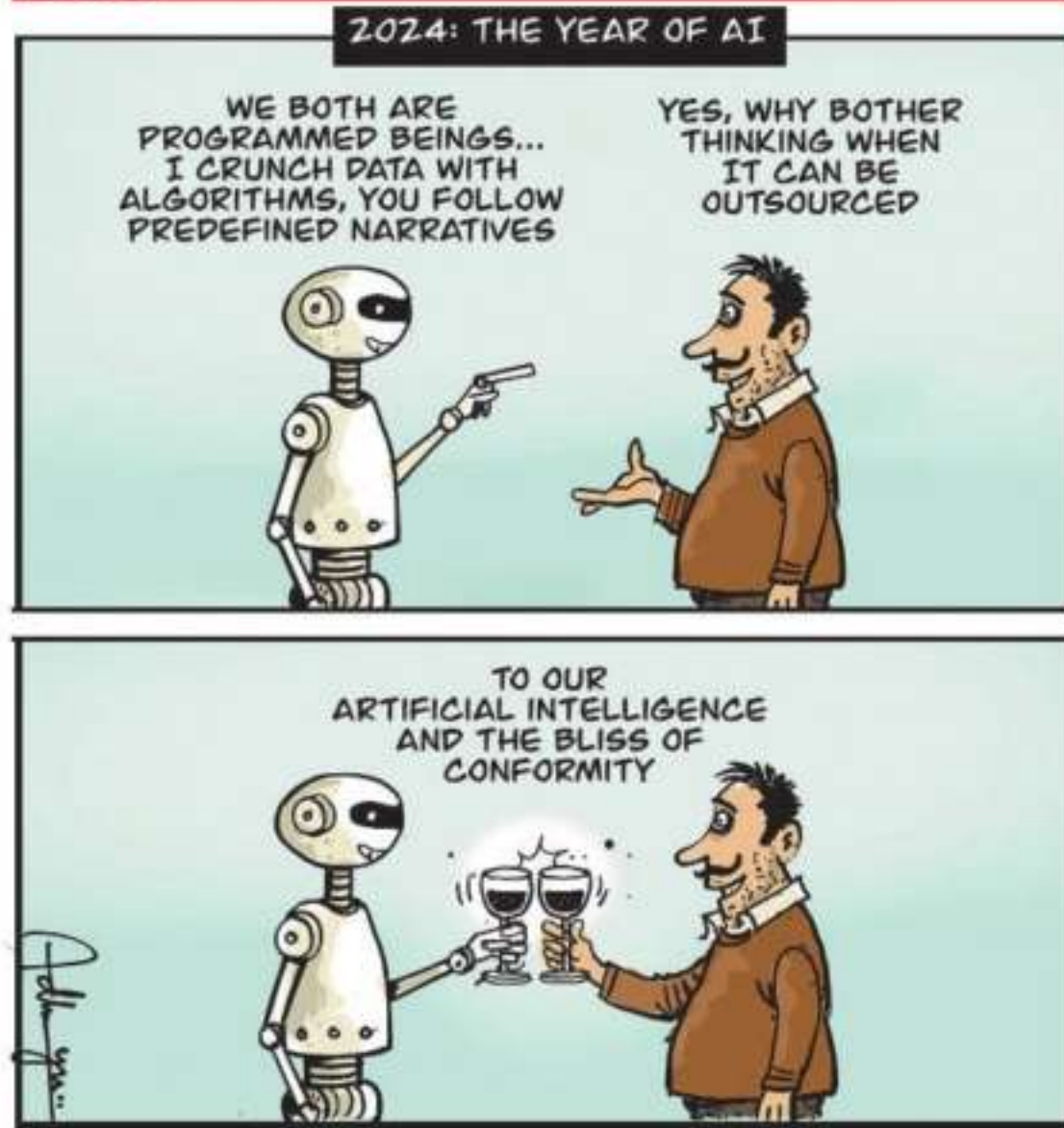
Need to boost cybersecurity to check bank frauds, says FM

New Delhi: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday asked public sector bank chiefs to focus on improving cybersecurity and preventing frauds, including increasing consumer awareness on malicious calls, which have become a menace in recent months.

The strong message came in the backdrop of problems with UCO Bank's Instant Money Payment Service (IMPS) where the bank is yet to recover around Rs 100 crore as well as the irregularities at Bank of Baroda, which was done by its employees in enrolling for the BoB World App. It resulted in a rap on the knuckles by the RBI. Sitharaman highlighted how frauds posed a critical threat to the security of customers and the banks themselves and could result in losses and erode public trust.

Banks have been told to keep an eye on fraud prevention and wilful defrauds, while educating customers on safe banking practices. The lenders have been asked to ensure timely identification of accounts and probe them, while putting in more effort to recover the dues. **TNN**

TOI LINE OF NO CONTROL SANDEEP ADHWARYU



Man found dead near Army firing range, 3rd case in mth

Meerut: A 62-year-old man was found dead near Badkala firing range in UP's Saharanpur district on Friday. The man, identified as Ghulam Mustafa, died due to "excessive blood loss" amid an Army practice session, police said on Saturday. Mustafa, who belonged to Van Gujar community, was living "illegally" in a thatched hut in Badkala forest, near the range, reports **Krishna Chaudhary**.

SP (Rural, Saharanpur), Sagar Jain, said, "The cause of Mustafa's death remains unclear. The preliminary post-mortem report says that he suffered pelvic fracture and severe bruises in the back. He

probably fell on his back while trying to run away from the firing exercise and died due to blood loss from the bruises."

Notably, this is the third such incident in a month in the region. On December 14, Hanif Ahmed, 11, also from the Van Gujar community, died while trying to dismantle an explosive material secured from a nearby firing range, about 2km away from home at Mirzapur in Saharanpur. On November 29, a 37-year-old scrap dealer, Mohd Tauseef, died when a misfired shell — from a different firing range — which he was trying to dismantle, exploded in his shop in Meerut's Amheda village.

Kedar gets no conviction relief, denied bail

Sarfaraz Ahmed
@timesgroup.com

Nagpur: The Nagpur district and sessions court on Saturday rejected disqualified Maharashtra Congress MLA Sunil Kedar's plea seeking stay on his conviction, suspension of his jail term and grant of bail. Kedar had filed the plea after being convicted in Rs 150-crore Nagpur District Central Cooperative Bank (NDCCB) scam. Rejecting Kedar's applica-

tion, district and additional sessions judge RS Patil-Bhosale said, "It would send a wrong message to society if bail is granted to such an accused as the scam involved Rs 150 crore of hard-earned money of the poor farmers and common man." Kedar was the bank's chairman when the scam took place in 2002.

A magisterial court had on December 22 convicted Kedar and five others — NDCCB ex-general manager Ashok

Chaudhary, stockbroker Ketan Seth, Giltage Management Services manager Amit Verma, senior vice-president of Home Trade Securities Subodh Bhandari and director of Home Trade Securities Nandkishor Trivedi — and awarded them five years of rigorous imprisonment.


The five others convicted along with Kedar had filed separate bail applications. The court would decide on these applications on January 2.

Nitish in touch with BJP and can return to NDA, says Bihar ex-CM Manjhi



Bihar's former CM Jitan Ram Manjhi on Saturday claimed CM Nitish Kumar was in touch with BJP leadership and could return to the NDA fold, reports **Manoj Chaurasia**. Rubbishing his claim, JD(U) accused the former CM of spreading "rumours" under BJP pressure.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT										
CORRIGENDUM										
The tenders for the following works called vide this office letter No. SEVIII/C&NIT/PMGSY-III/2023-2024/- 11154-90 dated 20.11.2023 is hereby cancelled, due to administrative reasons.										
Sr. No.	District	Group No.	Package No.	Name of the Road	Period of Completion (Months)	Estimated Cost Excluding GST (Rs. Lakh)	Total Cost excluding GST (Rs. Lakh)	Bid Security (Rs. lakh)		
					6	7	8	9	10	
1.	Salooni	SAL-02-I	HP-02-20	1) Up-Gradation of Maira to Chakhotar road km 0/0 to 10/260.	24	2533.75	129.21	2662.96	53.26	
			HP-02-21	2) Up-Gradation of Kheri to Bhunad road km 0/0 to 9/230.						
2.	Salooni	SAL-02-II	HP-02-18	Up-Gradation of Lachori to Salwan road km 0/0 to 18/0.	18	1725.93	119.34	1845.27	36.91	
Superintending Engineer, 7 th Circle HPPWD, Dalhousie.										
Advt No. 4693/30/12/2023					HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK					


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AGARWAL - BISA

PQM for B'ful girl, CA, 53rd, July 94, Wkg in MNC 20LPA, from affluent biz fmly of U.P. seeks suitable educated boy. M.No. 941516402, 9453514881

SM4 Singhal-Manglik Feb92, 52nd, Asst Prof. in Engg. Univ., PhD (CSE), Parents in Central Govt. Jaipur. Upper Caste & Location No Bar. 6375477118

PQSM4 Nov 94/52nd, Masters (NUS, Singapore), B.E. CSE, charming working girl. Father Senior Govt officer. 8595418315

MBA B.Tech fm premier instt. B'ful 1989/5th, Sr. Mgr MNC Delhi NCR 40-LPA. Reputed Well Edu Affluent Status fmly. Ok to relocate. 9599596275.

BRAHMIN

WELL-EMPLOYED match for beautiful 54th MDS 31 yrs SPB employed girl well-to-do family No belief in horoscope dowry Early decent marriage vivekdube@hotmail.com

DOCTOR / professionally qualified match for Saraswat Brahmin post graduate doctor girl Dec 94/53rd. Contact 941438836.

MATCH for KKB 4.94/55th B.Tech, MBA 12 LPA/wkg DELOITTE, Gurugram N.M. smart girl. All Brahmin welcome. BHP : 8335089534

BHUMIHAR Brahmin IAS officer from MNC seeks alliance from highly qualified, well settled professionals for his 1996 born, 52nd, family oriented only daughter, who's done MBBS from Newcastle Medical School, UK, M.Sc. (Clinical Neuroscience) from Kings College, London. Currently working with NHS, London (pursuing specialization in Radiology). Contact with biodata on -419303620300

BHUMIHAR Brahmin IAS officer from MNC seeks alliance from highly qualified, well settled professionals for his 1996 born, 52nd, family oriented only daughter, who's done MBBS from Newcastle Medical School, UK, M.Sc. (Clinical Neuroscience) from Kings College, London. Currently working with NHS, London (pursuing specialization in Radiology). Contact with biodata on -419303620300

B.TECH Comp. MBA. Working IICICI Bank 23-10-96, 3.35 PM Kolkata 56.5th slim fair, Parents Doctors, Kashyap Govt. No Dowry. 9432364338

REPUTED family Good looking Brahmin girl, M. Arch in Architectural Design, Practicing in Bhopal, 31/53rd Contact: 9755413772, 9424414058

WANTED Groom for Very B'ful Girl 9.12.1985 Born Brahmin Girl, 54th, Fair Complexion, LLM from Columbia University New York, Handsome Income. Call 9899103020, 9968402447 Email: mangalyeni@gmail.com

SM4 KAUSHIK B'ful girl 26/57th MBA/FIN. work UK Bank Noida Seeks. Veg. B.Tech/MBA, prof. NCR #740996831, 8006781299

BRAHMIN Girl 31 Yr 56th, B.Arch(Running own Ethnic wear Studio), seeking well settled/Business class, Upper Cast Hindu family. Mail avanisharma13@gmail.com

BRAHMIN Vats 30/55th settled in London as physio-therapist beautiful requires UK London settled Brahmin veg. boy. #8979218607

BRAHMIN Girl 1991/52nd IIT, MS, Manager, Top MNC, India, Parents Class I Govt Officer, MP. Cont: 9424419272/8329883131

BRAHMIN MBA, MSC (UK), very fair, Jan 95/54, working in MNC in London, seeking well qualified alliance from abroad/India. Parents highly placed professionals. WhatsApp 8433741137

SARYUPARI Brahmin, 34 MBBS MD.2 seeks a suitable, vegetarian, unmarried brahmin groom. Contact: 9453057934, 7235853605

SM for br. girl 56th/ 14.07.86, 2.45 PM, Ghabaziad / MBA & working. Caste No Bar. Call / WhatsApp: 9818434007, E-mail: pkvashishtha@gmail.com

BRAHMIN Girl, 1986/ 58th, B.A., LL.B. Company Secretary, Currently Law Research Associate NCLT, Known Business Family from Nagpur, MH. All Brahmins accepted. Prefer Metro City based Business/Legal/Corporate Professional. Call: 9371490165.

PQM for LLB /LLM Veg Gaur Brahmin Girl 35/54th Fair B'ful South Delhi own office. Send BHP Whatsapp / Call 9650992842, 9650998582

SM4 Smart, Fair Girl, divorcee, BDS/ MDS (Gold Medalist) 38/54th, Own clinic, Jaipur seeks Doctor. In India or Abroad, preferred Brahmin or other caste. Ashok - 9829050160, 9314050160

ADVICE

Readers are advised to make appropriate / thorough enquiries before acting upon any advertisement. This newspaper does not vouch or subscribe to claims and representations made by advertisers regarding particulars of status, age, income of bride/groom.

SUITABLE Match for good looking Mathur girl, 27/57th B.E. DTU, Own Business, Reputed family, Settled in Delhi, Cast No bar. WhatsApp-9810132211

JOURNALIST, Feb 91/51st Wkg in MUM. Father Retd PSB Officer, Seeks Prof. Qual Boy. 9450444676, 9721988999, ketanbrh@gmail.com

SM for beautiful very fair Srivastava Girl 91 born, CA (IPCC) LL.B. Husband expired in Corona Pandemic. Working in reputed MNC Pune. Well reputed family, Father ret'd. / Class I officer - Early marriage - 9936805555

BTECH MBA very fair working in MNC Noida high pkg Dec84 53rd never married NM early marriage preferred send BHP 9871566645

PQSM4 Sriv. C'ent Edu. fair 29/55th/30-LPA MNC. B.Tech, MBA, pfrd. IIT, NIT CSE, charming working girl. Father, ramesh.791y@gmail.com

MEDICO groom PG clinical subject for a medico Saxena fair girl 53rd /14.10.1989, DNB Ophthalmology wkg as SR in govt hospital. # 9827116322

PQM4 Beautiful, Kayastha, Non Mangalki Shrivastava, Aug 89, B.E., MBA, Senior Officer in Bank at Mumbai, 21 lacs p.a. p.k.e. Father Former High Court Judge settled in Bhopal 53rd UGC (NET), PhD (Electronics), Asst. Professor in University. Caste No Bar. Mob: 954084799

SM4 1993 born Delhi based Gaur Brahmin girl, 53rd/healthy JBT M.com, seeks suitable gaur brahmin match. #9818076955

PQM4 Saraswat Brahmin Girl (27/158cm) B.Tech MBA Fair MNC Grg. 10-LPA. Follower of Radha. Soami (Beas) Faith. W.A - 8587827600

KHATRI

WANTED IT engr Khatri Boy from Edu family in Delhi/NCR for KA Psychology girl 52nd/29 wkg HR hgn, father exporter karyalvinid1954@gmail.com

SM 4 b'ful, Punjabi Khatri girl, Jan 94/53rd CA wkg reprod. Prof. qual. preferred M: 9818213933

SM for Khatri Beautiful girl, 8/7/1994 5-5th, B-Tech, Working (MNC & Gurgaon) Based, Muzafarnagar, Prtrd- Well Stld, Family-921905644

SUITABLE Unmarried Boy for V.B'ful PB, Arora Unmarried Delhi Born 1972/5th, 4th looks younger B.sc (maths) CSE, Prof. Qdfr Associates in Family Education Business Em: kkdrr2023@gmail.com

SM4 Fair Khatri Girl, June, 93/ 51st, Masters CS. Wkg as S/W Engineer in Apple (New York) Wapp/call: 9868188136

SUITABLE match for unmarried Punjabi Khatri girl 1980 born. M.A. B.E.D. Wapp or Cont on 958078517, Em: artivarma51@gmail.com

WELL settled Unmarried Prof. for Pbi Khatri b'ful. Girl, Aug 85/54th, MSc, Mgr 12 Lac Father Sr Class-I offer (R) 9876504958

PQM for CS, LLB gold medalist from NLU Gujrat 30/54th working with Law firm, GGN, 60LPA Per. around Delhi 9988478689

SM4 Fair Khatri Girl, Aug, 94/ 5th, B.Tech. Wkg Sr. S/W Engineer reputed Bank Toronto Canada (PR holder), Wapp / Ph: 991114266, 9711165476

KUSHWAHA

MAURYA 54th/29th, fair, LLB (Hons.), 13 lakhs p.a., Corporate Lawyer, Looking for a suitable groom in Mumbai, Bangalore, Delhi 9140778730, 9106629968

PAL

Agri based Pal, Baghel, Dhangar business family resides in a joint family setup seeks match for their beautiful daughter, Height 5'4", Dec 94. She has completed her MBA & B.Tech. We are looking for a boy who works in government Sector, is family oriented and a confident individual.

MAURYA 54th/29th, fair, LLB (Hons.), 13 lakhs p.a., Corporate Lawyer, Looking for a suitable groom in Mumbai, Bangalore, Delhi 9140778730, 9106629968

GURIJAR

SUITABLE match for beautiful Gujar Girl, Well educated, 90 born, Height 5'7th Working in MNC in Delhi. Avoid Ratke & Dahpa (Mob): 7606065719

JAIN

SM for MDS Dr. 93 born, gori, slim, b'ful 51 hmyt yet modern girl from rptd Jain fmly. Family flexible regarding Jain/Agarwal, profession 9426058311

JATAV

A well-qualified beautiful girl graduate from NLU 29/53rd seeking a suitable match from class I govt officer or highly paid in MNC. Father Retd. Chief Engineer Lucknow based. Contact 9415024636.

SM4 jatav b'ful slim girl DLI 39/410th, PGDMR, B.Sc, O'LV, working in software co. M: 0988927121 Cast No Bar

KAYASTHA

MATCH for Anshik Manglik Mathur Girl 32/160cm/4.2 LPA, Post Graduate, Nutritionist in Reputed Delhi Hospital. Call/Whatsapp: 9650998800

SAXENA girl Nov 1988/53rd, v.b'ful, fair, B.Pharm, MBA, wkg NCR, US.MNC. Seeks prof qldf match IT/Dr Govt India/ Abroad. UCNB. M: 638980772

SUITABLE match for kayastha girl, preferably married, Sept 1994 born, 53rd, htech biotech, event manager, fair, Agra. Father, Exec. Engineer Uppcl. # 8218626479

SM4 Aggarwal Girl Mar. 81/158 cm frm Delhi based fmly. Never married. Wkg as Govt Teacher. 9873223221, rajrani21052000@gmail.com

AGARWAL Girl 30/55th Fair V'ful MBA MNC GGN, Consultant Top MNC GGN 50LPA DRs & ENGR. Fmly seeks PQM H'sm MBA IIM TIER I MS/PG/RA Send Profile & Photo- W.A - 8533069728, Email: dr.mla53@gmail.com

AGARWAL Girl 30/55th Fair V'ful MBA MNC GGN, Consultant Top MNC GGN 50LPA DRs & ENGR. Fmly seeks PQM H'sm MBA IIM TIER I MS/PG/RA Send Profile & Photo- W.A - 8533069728, Email: dr.mla53@gmail.com

PQM4 a smart & attractive Garg girl 29/ 53, doing Ph.D in B.E. DTU, Own Business, affluent family: 7570618755

SM4 b'ful, fair, Mittal girl 6/7 59/157cm, B.Tech wkg MNC Noida, 27lpa, fthr Ret.Ch.Er. & Advstr. Sci. C. Govt. 9818844 694 (12-6pm), 9990551234

JAIN /Mittal sweet, charming tall & beautiful, Sep. 1992 /57th MBBS, MBA, Doctor Girl, preferably Delhi/NCR based Brahmin, Professional, Doctor boy from Aggarwal / Jain family. # 9871831448

CA working in MNC Aggarwal 27/56th smart girl. Reputed business family of Lucknow. Looking for educated boy. Contact : 9839487329

SM for 27 yrs, Gupta girl, fair, slim, 55th, MSB, working Gurgaon Seeks well settled salaried/businessman in Delhi / NCR. Contact : 9810182160 Em: ajaygupta960@gmail.com

PQM4 slim B'ful May91 born Mittal girl 51st MBA, working US based company Gurgaon 40LPA+, decent marriage. Whatsapp: call: 8527366466

SM4 Beautiful Gupta girl 1996 / 52nd, M.A, B.Ed English (Hons.), working as a Teacher, Delhi, Whatsapp / Call: 9911298432

AGARWAL 26/53rd B'ful Girl B.Tech MBA wkg MNC Fair Chief Manager in Coal India Ltd seeks H'some Boy (C class + B'sman) Both Prof. 7361001184

Highly educated, South Delhi based, Industrialist Jain Vegetarian family, seeks for very fair, slim, charming, talented B.Com (Hons), MBA-France, June, 84/ 53rd, never married daughter, Alliance (India/ Abroad) from well educated, settled boy in Business/Profession nlmksh76@gmail.com 9810160619

ARORA

SM4 b'ful, fair, 1986/56th girl (Nvr marrd), MBA, fair highly rptd Chandigarh b's b'ness man. Pref'd same s'ts fmly. #985443310, 9779696569

JAT

AFFLUENT JAT fmly Extrly b'ful girl Aug 92/ 53 wkg MNC, Pfr Chief Engr. Govt. Prof. Civil Ser. D/ Business / IIT-HM. Caste No Bar, 9818496345

RAJPUT

PQSM4 fair, b'ful, convent. Ed. 29 Yr, 52nd, BALLBL(NLU), LLM(UK), Rajput girl, father Sr Govt. Officer, M:9480825796, All upper caste acceptable

31/5/6.35th FAIR & b'ful girl doing MD (Path), parents teacher in Medical College at Patna. Seeks Rajput boy doing /dome Prof. Contact 9343380811

KUSHWAHA

RATHORE girl 32/56th converted b'ful working in top MNC, Father Business. Ph: 9039351573. Send BHP@vaibhavrathore12@gmail.com

31/5/6.35th FAIR & b'ful girl doing MD (Path), parents teacher in Medical College at Patna. Seeks Rajput boy doing /dome Prof. Contact 9343380811

WELL-SETTLED prof. match for 34/170 smart, beautiful, Anshik Manglik Punjabi Khatri, B.Tech, Working in Germany. Send BHP. Contact 9310456877

GROOM WANTED Hindu NAI Udaipur based 92 born 5'3 convert educated MBA Finance, working as a Wealth Manager in Mumbai. Looking for a well educated and progressive boy. CASTE NO BAR. Cont.: 9826348116 9828980912

MUSLIM

SUNNI sheikh, 40/56th fair Namazl, Prof in Govt. Degree Coll. Lucknow. Pref. Professionally Qualified Service / B'ness class boy. #8181946786

SHEIKH /SIDDIQUEI girl 26/55th MS S.Korea, pursuing Phd frm U.S. seeks PQM from e d u c a t e d f a m i l y (W.A) 9785835382, 7754899333

SM4 26/160, BA has done COPA course frm IIT Quaraishi fmly seeks well stld boy below 30 # 9076626366, 9599750645

MEDICO MD/MS/IAS/IPS/IES/Juglup match 4 SM Sheikh fair slim girl MBBS/DMRD/DMB 34/55th, Father Businessman, Farmer, Early Decent Marriage. M: 7017171575

PQ M4 Del bsd vfair, b'ful slim Ansari girl 30/53rd MBA Hamard Wkg MNC, Father govt off. Broths wkg MNC. Send B/P. M/W: 8395026071

USA/SM Parents Seeking for Doctor of Pharmacy Daughter 59th/ 23 Yrs, Well Educated, Tall Boy 5'10th Above holding Islamic Values, from Respected Elite Muslim Family, WhatsApp Details +1 (732) 763-7333

SUNNI Muslim 35-5/5th MA, English, Conv. Edu. Ajmer Based, Need well educated Professionally qualified boy. Early Marriage # 9414099558

SM4 beautiful, tall, slim fair Dr. Girl, Garg 34 / 54th, MD (Biochem) Asst. Prof. Delhi Govt, Prev. Short Marriage, Doctors' Family. 9819014671

GUPTA B'FUL fair MBBS/MD/Patho) Doctor girl 53rd/ Sept 93 born, well reprod family, Seeks Medical PG match. Mob- 9910159993

SUNNI educated groom needed for Delhi based Sheikh Siddiqui working girl, Fair 55, 1986, Reputed family from Bly. 9088564973

SM4 sunni ansari 31/53rd MBA B'ful V.fair slim unmarried girl, preference to lko/ U.P. 9794841012/8840866256 sharm ilanazneen.2015@gmail.com

COMPATIBLE M4 b'ful well cultured girl 1993/5th, Consultant in Hospital/Seeks well settled boy in India/ Abroad. WhatsApp: 9560838333

DOCTOR alliance invited from Maheshwari/Agarwal/ Jais in Delhi/Agarwal 4 Medico b'ful fair girl, July 97/ 53rd doing MD (Resp. Med.) in Jpr. Parents owner of multi-specialty hospital. 8005895003

UK bsd Doctor MSc Psych MRCP UK Father Dec 91/58th Wkg NHS UK Father Doctor, seeks Prof. Qual groom, 9052282385, yswdrdi@gmail.com

PB Khatri Delhi bsd B'ful Aug/93/5th 2nd MBBS, DNB (OBGYN) S R in Delhi Govt hosp. Seeks medical / civil services match. # 9818979871

SM4 Khandelwal girl 30/53rd Fair, Veg. Doctor (MS Ophthal) From Reputed family seeks MD/MS/DM/MCH/IAS/IPS #9414023576

MD/MS/DNB Doctor Groom in (Final), 14.12.90, (OBS & Gynae), Kurm girl 52nd/1991 born. Call: 9560703162, 9415149239

IAS/ ALLIED SERVICES RTIS MA (Eco) DU, March 94/ 54th, 12-43 PM (Lko), Aggarwal B'ful Girl, Posted in U.P. Father Delhi based Business Seeks IAS/IPS/IRS/ Jd. # 9871999606 Em: rajnijdall2@gmail.com

SM4 Mnglik Prajapati, MBA, CA (Final), 14.12.90, 3:15AM, Ambala, 53rd, Uppr Cast Only, 9416022803, vishaldayal174@gmail.com

PQM4 nvr marrd, convent edu smart good looking oct9/5 B.ed Sikh girl wkg/Reputed School Gurgaon seeks edu. well sett boy. #9836817897, 9811358656

SM4 Mnglik Prajapati, MBA, CA (Final), 14.12.90, 3:15AM, Ambala, 53rd, Uppr Cast Only, 9416022803, vishaldayal174@gmail.com

PQM4 B.Tech+MBA Manglik Rajput Girl working MNC, 50 lakhs p.kg, 5/6th, 8-Oct-90, 7:39 AM, Delhi: #9810476472

BY RELIGION

BUDDHIST

S/C Wheatish 30/56th Cracked UPPSCDU) 2022 Pursuing PhD LU seeks IAS/Judge groom from OBC/SC Groom - 8795810590

HINDU

PROF CaPRCard dir MNC Brah. Ht. 55 seeks prof boy age 34-37, email: payal.sharma.cn@gmail.com

SM for 51st/1989 born, b'ful, Jat, PhD Life sciences, scientist in Chicago, Father Ex. AirIndia, base Delhi Dwarka No cast barrier. # 9871278816

SM4 Grhwli BrhmGd B.TechMBAHR, 1.10.85/5, 50AM/Mum Ht 5-5th wrk Corp seeks prof Qlfr All B'rahmin/Rajput/Upest boy in Mumbai, other metros, Foreign J.S.I.D. ZAAU 7373, M9869008172/SN. 580111@gmail.com

82NOV 61 fair beautiful mba mcom never married girl seeks caring understanding financially stable partner age 36-46 yrs Contact - 6357132220

WELL-SETTLED prof. match for 34/170 smart, beautiful, Anshik Manglik Punjabi Khatri, B.Tech, Working in Germany. Send BHP. Contact 9310456877

SM4 Corporate Lawyer, b'ful Slim girl 16/12/91 2am 5'5th Excellent Academic Record Salary 35LPA, South Delhi based Well Educated Punjabi Khatri fmly, Father CA, Mother IT Prof. At Leadership Position. Whatsapp 9250008191

SM4 fair slim Hindu girl Aug 85 5'4th never married IIT Masters USA data science professional working in USA cast no bar contact 9979413156

B'FUL Brahmin Doctor, Cosmo Dermatologist Girl 29/58th doing Post Graduation in Health Care Mgmt.(Ontario Canada) Parents Medical Consultants, Seeks Professional Qualified & Well Settled Tall Boy. call/w.app: 8130146691

PQM4 nvr married kysth gori girl 56th, 26.12.1985 M.Sc. B.Ed(DU) TGT(Chem.) Elite delhi schi scale 7th Pay. Div. excuse, prof. Ncr boy upto 40yrs. W:9999319898

SM4 Dr. Girl 35/53rd, wrking as ICU Resident Doctor in Varanasi seeks well settld boy in Varanasi. Caste No Bar # 70080680779, 9036793371

MATCH for Gurgaon working HR Girl (29 yrs, 5'4th Rajput) Father Director. 2nd Marriage Boys may also send BHP 9411759460.

COMPATIBLE M4 b'ful well cultured girl 1993/5th, Consultant in Hospital/Seeks well settled boy in India/ Abroad. WhatsApp: 9560838333

SM4 fair B

DISTRICT POLICE HEADQUARTERS KATHUA

E- mail : sspkathua@jkpolice.gov.in

Fax/Phone No. : 01922-234010

LOOK OUT NOTICE

On 20-12-2023, one Sadiq Ali S/O Mohd Farid R/O Chack Balanda Pacca Katha Tehsil Dinga Amb District Kathua lodged a written report at P/S Hiranagar stating therein that on 18-12-2023, his wife namely Jamila Bano, Age about 25 years is missing from his home. The complainant tried his best to search his wife but is still in vain. On this, missing report vide DD No. 18 dated 20-12-2023 has been entered at P/S Hiranagar.

During the course of investigation, best efforts were made to locate missing individual, whereas she is still un-traced.

As such Description Roll/Photograph of said missing individual is being shared with the appeal that anybody having clue/information about her whereabouts may inform us accordingly. The informer will be rewarded suitably :-

DESCRIPTION ROLL

- Name Jamila Bano
- Husband Sadiq Ali
- Permanent Address Chack Balanda Pacca Katha
- Present Address Draman Morha Rotodi
- Tehsil Dinga Amb
- Police Station Hiranagar
- Age 25 years
- Height 05 Feet
- Complexion wheatish
- Build Normal
- Face Oval
- Eyes Black
- Languages known Dogri/Hindi

PHOTOGRAPH

Any information related to the whereabouts of the subject may be communicated on following contacts :-

1. DPO Kathua-01922-234010 (Phone/Fax)
2. dpokathua@jkpolice.gov.in (Mail ID)
3. PCR Kathua-01922-234311 (Phone/Fax)
4. Police Station Hiranagar- 01922-247222

**Sr. Superintendent of Police,
Kathua.**

DIP No DIP/J-13214/23/29/2023

Like Ram Lalla, 4cr people have got own homes: PM in Ayodhya

'There Need Not Be A Duel Between Development And Devotion'

Pankaj Shah,
Arvind Chauhan & Shalabh | TNN

Ayodhya/Lucknow: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said development and devotion did not have to be at loggerheads, pointing out that India was taking long strides in digital technology while preserving its pilgrimage sites.

At a public gathering, he said this was the same Ayodhya where Ram Lalla lived in a tent for years. "But now not only has Ram got a permanent temple, but also 4 crore people have received their own permanent house (under PM Awas Yojana)," he said.

The PM categorically linked the consecration ceremony with a "swachhata abhiyan", appealing to temples across the country to carry out a cleanliness drive from Makar Sankranti onwards. He also called upon Ayodhya's people to get ready for a mammoth influx of tourists: "Gear up to make Ayodhya the cleanest city not only in India but the entire world."

Acknowledging people's desire to be present for the "pran pratishtha" of the idol of Ram Lalla, the PM, however, requested everyone to plan



PM Narendra Modi interacts with students during the flag-off ceremony of an Amrit Bharat train in Ayodhya on Saturday

their visits to Ayodhya after January 22 so that the security and arrangements are not overwhelmed. "You have waited for more than 500 years. Do wait for some more days and then come to Ayodhya after considering all the security aspects," he said.

Stressing that there need not be a duel between development and devotion, Modi said that if a country has to progress, then it will have to preserve its cultural heritage. "Aaj ka Bharat nutan and puratan...Donon ko atmsaat kar raha hai (Today's Bharat is assimilating new-age development and its age-old culture)," said Modi.

Further emphasising that development does not take

place at the cost of heritage, the PM said: "Not only has Kashi Vishwanath Dham been renovated, but 30,000 panchayat bhawans are being constructed; not only has Kedarnath Dham been given a facelift, but more than 315 medical colleges have also been constructed; not only has the Mahakal temple been spruced up, but piped water supply has also been ensured under the Har Ghar Jal mission. We are not only fathoming the mysteries of the sun, moon and oceans but also bringing back our ancient idols to the country."

The PM said that the mood of the country was being reflected in Ayodhya. "Today, we are celebrating

the festival of development. After a few days, it will be a celebration of heritage and tradition. Today, we are witnessing the grandeur of development, and after a few days we will see the splendour of heritage. Yahi toh Bharat hai (This is what India is all about)," he said while referring to the scheduled consecration ceremony.

Referring to the ancient glory of Ayodhya as described by Maharishi Valmiki, the PM reiterated the desire to bring back that grandeur by linking it with modernity. He said that the campaign to make India a developed country is getting new energy from Ayodhya, and added that his government would leave no stone unturned to ensure that every possible aspect of the temple town was developed.

In an apparent bid to reach out to the southern states, Modi recounted the importance of pilgrimages undertaken in states like Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh. He also referred to the Buddhist pilgrimage covering Kushinagar, Sarnath and Kapilvastu and those undertaken by the followers of Jainism.

Ayodhya case litigant Iqbal showers petals on PM's convoy

Ayodhya: Iqbal Ansari, a litigant in the Ram Janmabhoomi-Babri Masjid title suit case, was seen showering flower petals on PM Modi's motorcade in Ayodhya on Saturday.

Ansari described it as a momentous occasion. "He (Modi) has come to our place. He is our guest and our PM," he said after the cavalcade passed Paanji



Iqbal at the roadshow on Saturday

Tola area during the roadshow.

His father Hashim Ansari was the original litigant in the land dispute case. After he died at 95 in 2016, Iqbal became the litigant. Earlier, in October, Ansari had hailed Ayodhya as a place of religious significance for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians, saying deities from across the country were venerated here. TNN

C'garh sends 11 trucks with rice for Jan 22 event

Raipur: Chhattisgarh CM Vishnu Deo Sai Saturday flagged off trucks loaded with 300 metric tonnes of rice for the consecration ceremony in Ayodhya on January 22.

The Chhattisgarh Rice Millers Association organised a programme at Ram Mandir on VIP Road in Raipur, where the CM flagged off 11 trucks. Accompanied by cabinet ministers, Sai performed puja and prayed for the prosperity of the residents, seeking blessings from Lord Rama, Mother Janaki, and Lakshman. Raipur MP Sunil Soni, ministers Brijmohan Agrawal, Shyam Bihari Jaiswal, Dayal Das Baghel, Laxmi Rajwade, and other officials were present. TNN

'Did you have to bribe anyone?' Modi asks Ujjwala beneficiary

Shalabh@timesgroup.com

Ayodhya: Occupants of this Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana house in Kandharpur locality of Ayodhya were hardly known to the people in their neighbourhood till Saturday morning. However, by afternoon, Meera Manjhi and her family of five had attained celebrity status.

It all happened because of one small detour PM Narendra Modi took while going to the airport after inaugurating the Ayodhya Dham railway station. His destination was Meera's modest house. She was informed just an hour before the PM landed at the house of the 10th crore beneficiary of Ujjwala scheme.

She had received her gas stove and cylinder on Friday. An hour before Modi came calling on Saturday, officials told Meera that some top government officer was expected to visit her house and seek some details. "We were also told to make the house ready for the high-profile visit and cook something to offer to the visitor," said Meera while interacting with reporters after



PM Modi visits Meera, the 10th crore beneficiary of Ujjwala scheme

the PM left her house.

The details of Modi's plan to spend 15 minutes at the house of the Manjhi family was not known to the local residents, political leaders and even the beat-duty police officials. Upon the PM's arrival, the entire area resonated with chants of "Modi-Modi".

Meera, her husband Suraj, the couple's children and her parents-in-law were in the house when the PM arrived. After Modi interacted with the children briefly, he was offered tea. He asked the family a few questions — "Did you have to bribe anyone to avail the benefits of the scheme?"... "Have you got direct benefit transfer in-

to your bank account?"

During their interaction, Meera and Suraj told the PM that besides availing the benefit of the Ujjwala scheme, they have also got a pucca house under the PMAY (Urban), free electricity and water supply connections, apart from free ration supplies.

Modi complimented Meera, who sells flowers near the banks of Saryu ghat for a living, for the tea. "Being a chawala in the past, I know how good tea really tastes," Modi said, adding jovially that it had become a little sweeter. "Demand for your flowers will go up," he also said, hinting at an increased count of visitors once the Ram temple opens.

When Pushpak Vimaan touched down at Valmiki int'l airport

Saurabh.Sinha
@timesgroup.com

Ayodhya: "A pilgrimage on a Pushpak Vimaan." That's how passengers described IndiGo's Airbus A320 (VT-IQA) on Saturday afternoon. The aircraft was to operate a first commercial flight to Maharishi Valmiki International Airport in Ayodhya soon after PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the airport.

"We just had to be on this flight and will return after a darshan of Ram Lalla at the temple when it is inaugurated, on January 22. It's our good fortune, a divine providence, to be flying to Ayodhya on the first flight," said Kamal Kumar, a garments dealer from Sikar, Rajasthan, at IGIA's T2.

After everyone checked in, cleared security and assembled to board at Gate 23, the atmosphere there grew electric.



Lord Ram's journey since birth to return to Ayodhya after a 14-year-long exile is painted on the 120m long wall of the Ayodhya airport

There was chanting of Ram dhun and the devout gave a Shri Ram patka (printed scarf) to everyone at the boarding gate. Captain Ashutosh Shekhar also got a patka from devotees who thanked him profusely for operating their Pushpak Vimaan. The captain's wife, Shweta Ranjan, was among the "lucky ones" to

be on this flight. Passengers chanted Ram dhun and Hanuman Chalisa as they waited for 6E-2128 to take off.

After a flight of an hour, passengers alighted at Ayodhya Airport to a warm welcome. Shortly after the IndiGo flight, the Air India Express plane landed at Ayodhya with 99 passengers from Delhi.

From young & old, warm welcome over 10km

Shalabh@timesgroup.com

Ayodhya: Braving the biting cold, lakhs of people queued up along key roads in the temple town to take part in the road show of PM Narendra Modi. People from all walks of life, young and old, came out in large numbers to greet Modi.

Among them were members of the saints and seers' community. The PM is set to attend the consecration event at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on January 22. Covering over 10km in a convoy of Toyota SUVs, Modi got a glimpse of a modern Ayodhya taking over the old as he traversed new road corridors and the Lucknow-Ayodhya national highway.

Towering cranes, newly constructed commercial complexes and revamped facades of establishments imparted a renewed look to the city.



Modi's roadshow on Saturday was in scale and size akin to the proposed Jan 22 event

Touted as a grand rehearsal of the consecration ceremony, Modi's roadshow was in scale and size akin to the proposed January 22 celebrations when 3,000 people, the who's who of the country, along with an equal number of saints and seers will gather in the city.

More than 150kg of rose petals and

other popular flowers adorned the elevated wooden platforms erected at 35 to 40 locations. Motorised flower cannons were also deployed where Modi was scheduled to make halts to acknowledge the crowds. At Tedhi Chowk crossing from where Modi turned towards the railway station, a large image of Lord Ganesh, made of flowers, alongside various characters from the Ramayana also formed with flowers drew his attention.

More than 45 stages hosted performances by folk artists, musicians, traditional dancers and other talented individuals. Ram Path was decorated with marigolds and colourful draperies while political leaders cluttered the skyline with hoardings and signages. Loudspeakers were put up across the 5-km long route and bhajans related to Lord Rama played in the background.

Govt. of Bihar

CABINET SECRETARIAT DEPARTMENT
(Directorate of Civil Aviation)
Patna Airport, Patna - 800014.

TEL. No:- 0612-2225659, 2224423, Fax 0612 2224614, e-mail-qcgovtofbihar@gmail.com

Letter. No: CBN(Misc.)-05-32/2023-745

CORRIGENDUM
(PR.NO.011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24)
CHANGE IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF EOI

With reference to our Expression of Interest (EOI) Ref. No. - PR.NO.011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24 published on date 05.11.2023 for Purchasing a brand new Twin Turbine Engine Aircraft.

Due to unavoidable Circumstances:-
We hereby revise last date of submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) to 15.01.2024 at 05:00 PM.

Participants are requested to contact Director, Operation (9431651514).

Alternatively, interested and qualified agencies may send their queries through mail cadbiar@bihar.gov.in.

For detailed notification or further updates, kindly visit the following website; www.state.bihar.gov.in/csd

Other terms and conditions of the tender published in PR.NO.011354 (Cabinet)/2023-24 will remain unchanged.

This bears approval of the Add. Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department.

(Capt Sheo Prakash)
Director, Operation

PR. No. 014468 (Cabinet Secretariat) 2023-24

This information is available on website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar also

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

Govt. of Bihar

CABINET SECRETARIAT DEPARTMENT
(Directorate of Civil Aviation)
Patna Airport, Patna - 800014.

TEL. No:- 0612-2225659, 2224423, Fax 0612 2224614, e-mail-qcgovtofbihar@gmail.com

Letter. No: CBN(Misc.)-05-32/2023-744

CORRIGENDUM
(PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24)
CHANGE IN LAST DATE OF SUBMISSION OF EOI

With reference to our Expression of Interest (EOI) Ref. No. - PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24 published on date 05.11.2023 for Purchasing a brand new Twin Turbine Engine Helicopter.

Due to unavoidable Circumstances:-
We hereby revise last date of submission of Expression of Interest (EOI) to 15.01.2024 at 05:00 PM.

Participants are requested to contact Director, Operation (9431651514).

Alternatively, interested and qualified agencies may send their queries through mail cadbiar@bihar.gov.in.

For detailed notification or further updates, kindly visit the following website; www.state.bihar.gov.in/csd

Other terms and conditions of the tender published in PR.NO.011352 (Cabinet)/2023-24 will remain unchanged.

This bears approval of the Add. Chief Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat Department.

(Capt Sheo Prakash)
Director, Operation

PR. No. 014467 (Cabinet Secretariat) 2023-24

This information is available on website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar also

नशे से बचने का है एक ही उपचार, दृढ़ संकल्प और परिवार से प्यार।

O-2031

E-Mail - sencrwangul@yahoo.co.in
Phone-06764- 236404

Government of Odisha
Office of the Chief Construction Engineer
Rural Works Circle, Angul
e-Procurement Notice for Building work in Odisha
Bid Identification No. Building Online AGL-37/2023-24 Dt. 29/12/2023

No. 3364

- Name of the work : Building works
- Total No. of work : 03 Nos.
- Estimated cost : Rs. 129.97 to 503.40 Lakh Approx.
- Class of Contractor : 'B' & 'A' Class
- Period of completion : 18 (Eighteen) Calendar Months
- Other details.

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender on-line for bidding		Last date & time of seeking tender clarification	Date & Time of opening of tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Angul	Building-Online-AGL-37/2023-24	05.01.2024 at 10:00 A.M	20.01.2024 upto 5.00 P.M	18.01.2024 upto 1.00 P.M	22.01.2024 upto 11.00 A.M	Will be intimated separately

(1) For detailed Notice inviting Tenders, Please visit to the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in

Sd/-
Chief Construction Engineer
Rural Works Circle, Angul
OIPR-25180/11/0057/23-24

O-2030

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER
RURAL WORKS CIRCLE, KENDRAPARA-JAJPUR
AT/PO - NAVABAZAR, CUTTACK-753004, Tel.No. 0671-2444488, Email - serw_kpd@yahoo.com
No. Tender Online RCK-46/23 Letter No. 4970 Date : 27.12.2023

e-Procurement NOTICE

- Name of the Work : Tender for the Bridge works under BSV in the Dist. of Kendrapara & Jajpur.
- Class of Contractor : As specified in the column-6 of the Annexure
- Time of Completion : As specified in the column-7 of the Annexure
- Detail Projects : As per Annexure attached
- Other details :

Procurement Officer	Bid Identification No.	Availability of tender On-line for bidding		Last Date & Time of seeking Tender Clarification	Date & Time of Opening of Tender	
		From	To		Technical Bid	Financial Bid
Chief Construction Engineer, Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur	Tender Online RCK - 46/23	06.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	21.01.2024 at 5.00 P.M.	21.01.2024 up to 2.00 P.M.	22.01.2024 at 11.00 A.M.	To be intimated later

Further details can be seen from the website www.tendersorissa.gov.in.

Sd/-
D.P. Karan
Chief Construction Engineer
Rural Works Circle, Kendrapara-Jajpur
OIPR - 25129/11/0057/23-24

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
Jal Shakti Department
Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K
Civil Secretariat, Srinagar/Jammu
(email : mdjjmjk@gmail.com)

CORRIGENDUM - 01
Dated : 28/12/2023

Subject :- NIT No. 01-SMD/JJM-J&K of 2023, dated 27-12-2023 issued for "Selection of conceptualization, design, fabrication and display of Tableau on Republic Day Function 2024 at Jammu.

Please read the table of critical dates as under in place of the table mentioned at Page No. 01 & 02 of the NIT referred above :

1	Date of issue of Notice	27-12-2023
2	Last date for Downloading	02.01.2024, 04.00 PM
3	Proposal submission Start Date	28-12-2023
4	Proposal submission End Date	02-01-2024 up to 3:00 PM
5	Last date for receipt of hard copy of Technical Cover in the Mission Directorate, JJM, J&K at its office in Jal Bhawan, Narwal, Jammu - 180006.	03-01-2024 up to 4:00 PM
6	Date and time for opening of Technical bids	02-01-2024 at 5:00 PM
7	Date, Time and Venue of Financial Bid Opening	To be notified separately
8	Tender Document fee (through RTGS, NEFT)	Rs. 1,000/- Non-refundable.
9	Accounts details	A/C No - 0110010200000985 IFSC Code JAKA0MOVING (J&K Bank) Varinder Singh Technical officer, Mission Directorate, JJM J&K, Jal Bhawan Narwal Jammu. 9419132039 Email Id - mdjjmjk@gmail.com
10	Details of Contact Person	

No :- SMD/JJM-JK/45/2023-24/731-35
Dated :- 28-12-2023.
DIP No:DIPIK-14434/23/29, 12, 2023

Sd/-
Technical Advisor
Mission Directorate, JJM, J&K

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4 C'garh doctors held over death from 'negligence'

Raipur: Four doctors of a private hospital in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur were arrested Friday after a complaint about alleged negligence and evidence-tampering pertaining to the death of a patient in 2016.

Devender Singh, Rajib Lochan, Manoj Rai and Sunil Kedia have been booked under IPC sections 304A (rash and negligent act leading to death), 201 (evidence tampering) and 34 (common intention), said Sarkanda SHO Jai Prakash. With the sections being bailable, they were later released.

The hospital had claimed the patient, Goldy Chhabra, died on December 26, 2016, from "sulphur poisoning". But his family alleged negligence by the hospital management and the doctors, leading to an investigation by Sarkanda police.

The allegations were confirmed by specialist doctors from the government as well as autopsy reports from the state-run Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS) in Bilaspur.

The report from the CIMS highlighted instances of negligence by the private hospital management and the doctors. The state's directorate of forensic sciences got these reports vetted by more experts and finally concluded that Goldy's death was the result of negligence by the private hospital and its doctors. TNN

Camps overrun, 151 Myanmar soldiers flee to Mizoram

Aizawl: At least 151 more Myanmar soldiers fled to Mizoram's Lawngtlai district on Friday night after their camps in the neighbouring country were overrun by an armed ethnic group, a senior state police official said on Saturday, reports HCVanlalruata. The Myanmarese army personnel, also known as the "Tatmadaw", fled their camp in Chin State with their arms and approached the Assam Rifles at Tuientlang, in Lawngtlai district, after their camps near the international border were overrun by Arakan Army fighters, he said. They were well armed.

Of the 151 soldiers, nine were injured and four of them were in critical condition, police said. Sources said they will soon be evacuated, most likely by Sunday, by the IAF from Parva, where they are currently lodged in an Assam Rifles camp. They will be handed over to the Myanmar military authorities along with their weapons via Moreh, Manipur. With the influx of 151 Myanmar soldiers, their number in Mizoram has risen to 255.

Shah pushes for 100% e-biz transition for cooperatives

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ahmedabad: Union home and cooperation minister Amit Shah on Saturday urged the National Cooperative Dairy Federation of India (NCDFI) to promote e-business for cooperatives. Delivering the keynote address at NCDFI e-market awards ceremony in Gandhinagar, Shah said NCDFI members must move towards e-business.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi brought about the digital revolution in India. Every G20 delegate, who came to India, was in awe of the extent of digital transactions taking place in India. India is among the fastest-growing digital economies in the world. I urge the NCDFI members to move 100% towards e-business," he said.

The minister also emphasised on forging cooperation among various cooperative institutions.

"Cooperation among cooperatives is important for progress of cooperative sector. We have begun with a small pilot project by giving Kisan Credit Cards to each farmer in a couple of districts in Gujarat itself. Each farmer's account is being transferred to a cooperative bank. Milk payments are being transferred into their bank accounts. If this model is implemented across the country, it will bring about a



Union home minister Amit Shah attends Smriti Mahotsav at the Swaminarayan Gurukul Vishwavidya Pratishtanam in Ahmedabad on Saturday

Ram temple event in Ayodhya, beginning of 'Amrit Kaal' not coincidence, a sign of India's rise: Shah

Union home minister Amit Shah said on Saturday that the consecration of Lord Ram's idol on January 22 and the beginning of India's 'Amrit Kaal' are not a mere coincidence but a sign that the country will rise to prominence on the world stage in the next 25 years.

"(Court) cases were made complicated and delayed. Then a government was formed under the leadership of Narendrabhai, and with the blessings and inspirations of saints, all the paths became smooth, and on January 22, Ram Lalla will sit in his house again," Shah said.

hughe change to further accelerate India's digital economy," Shah said.

The Union home minister also emphasised on promotion of natural farming and adopting a multi-

dimensional approach to achieve this. He encouraged cooperatives to set up cow dung collection centres, from where the same can be sent to biogas and manure plants.

Govt calendar highlights India's Atmanirbhar feats

New Delhi: Information and broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur on Saturday launched the government's 2024 calendar showcasing the social, cultural and economic transformation that the Modi government has brought to the lives of Indian people.

The 'Hamara Sankalp Viksit Bharat' themed-calendar, Thakur said, catalogues the government's achievements and the strides India has made towards becoming 'Atmanirbhar'. He said: "A country that was second largest importer of mobile phones is today the second largest manufacturer. A country that used to import vaccines is now distributing to the whole world. India is today a manufacturing giant." **TNN**

UP chief secy gets third extension till June 30

Uttar Pradesh chief secretary Durga Shankar Mishra, whose second extension was due to end on December 31, was given another extension of six months on Saturday night, ensuring that he will be at the helm of the administration beyond the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, reports **Neha Lalchandani**.

Mishra confirmed the development to **TOI** but official orders from the UP Government will be issued on Sunday.

HIMACHAL PRADESH PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Tel. No. 01799-221023
e-mail ee-raj-hp@nic.in

e-Procurement Notice INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

The Executive Engineer HPPWD Rajgarh Distt Sirmour H.P. on behalf of Governor of H.P. invites percentage rate, bids, in electronic tendering system, from the eligible class of contractor/Firms registered with HPPWD for the works as detailed in the table.

Sr. No. :- 1 Name of Work :- Construction of 2 Nos. Type-II Quarters Residential accommodation PWD Colony Rajgarh District Sirmour H.P. (SH- Construction of Civil work of Building portion, P/L WS&SI, C/O Septic Tank, Soak Pit, C/O Rain Harvesting Tank, C/O Site Development & Boundary wall and Gate etc).

Estimated Cost (Rs.) :- 1,11,65,075/- **Starting date for downloading Bid :-** 02.01.2024 **Earnest money :-** 2,23,500/- **Deadline for submission bid :-** 12.01.2024

The Bidders are advised to note other details for tenders from the department website www.hpntenders.gov.in.

Executive Engineer HPPWD Division Rajgarh Distt Sirmour HP on behalf of Governor of Himachal Pradesh
HIM SUCHANA AVAM JAN SAMPARK
Advt. No. 4719/30.12.2023

ARMY LAW COLLEGE, PUNE

Old Pune-Mumbai Highway (NH-4), Saibaba Sewadham, Kanhe, Pune- 412106
Phone No: 9168513509, Website: www.alcpune.com
An Institution of Army Welfare Education Society (AWES)
Affiliated to SPPU and Approved by BCI & Government of Maharashtra
(Permanently Non-Aided College)

SELECTION COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

1. Applications are invited for filling up the following full time post at Army Law College, Pune, offering 5 year integrated - B.B.A, LL.B Programme:-

Post	Eligibility Criteria	No of Vacancies
Principal	Minimum Qualification / Eligibility Criteria for appointment of Principal as prescribed by UGC, Savitribai Phule Pune University and Bar Council of India shall apply.	01 Post (Open to all)

2. **Eligibility**
- Ph.D. degree (in Law)
 - Professor/Associate Professor with a total service/ experience of at least fifteen years of teaching/research in Universities, Colleges and other institutions of higher education.
 - A minimum of 10 research publications in peer-reviewed or UGC-listed journals.
 - A minimum of 110 Research Score as per Appendix II Table 2 of UGC Regulations.
3. Candidates shall send applications along with Biodata and scanned copies of documents related to qualification/work experience by email at armylawcollegepune@gmail.com.
Last date for receipt of applications: **29 Feb 2024**.
4. **Pay & Allowances:** As per UGC/AWES norms.
5. **How to Apply:** Eligible candidates to send their application on plain paper indicating the post applied for, along with copies of relevant educational qualifications, experience certificates post qualifying NET/SET/ Ph.D (as applicable only to be considered), API/Research Score (self-certified, copy of which will be required to be certified by concerned university by the time of interview), details of Research Publications and two recent passport photographs to reach office of **THE REGISTRAR, ARMY LAW COLLEGE, PUNE** on the address given above by **29 Feb 2024**. Sending hard copy of the application by post is mandatory. Only shortlisted candidates will be called for the interview. No TA/DA admissible for the interview.

(Mr Ganeshappa Deshmane)
Principal-in-Charge

C-2245

ROURKELA MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Uditnagar, Rourkela, Pin-759012

Mail Id: rourkelamunicipality@gmail.com Telephone: (0661) 2500388

No.: 18135

Date : 26.12.2023

Quotation Call Notice

The Commissioner, Rourkela Municipal Corporation, Rourkela invites Quotation in sealed envelope from the intending Agencies/ Firms/ Manufacturers/ Dealers/ Suppliers for "Supply of ID Card with printed ribbon, Lamination of Certificate, Banner, Standee etc. for Jaga Mission Programme at Rourkela".

The sealed Quotation super scribbled as "Supply of ID Card with printed ribbon, Lamination of Certificate, Banner, Standee etc. for Jaga Mission Programme at Rourkela" should reach to the undersigned on or before 02.01.2024 up to 01:00 PM through Regd. post/ Speed Post/ Courier/ or by hand. The Quotations will be opened on the same day at 04:30 PM in presence of the Bidders or their authorized representatives who wish to attend. The rate quoted shall be including of all applicable taxes, Handling & Transportation/ delivery charges & excluding of GST. No extra cost on any account whatsoever will be admissible. The agency must submit their quotation along with photocopies of valid GST registration certificate, PAN Card, Bid cost of Rs. 7,080/- (Non-refundable) including GST in shape of DD/ Cheque in favour of "Commissioner, Rourkela Municipal Corporation, Rourkela" payable at Rourkela, Failing which the quotation of the bidder will be rejected. Authority will not be responsible for any delay in receipt of quotations and the same will not be accepted. The quotation paper may be downloaded from RMC website (www.rmc.nic.in). The undersigned reserves the right to reject/ cancel any or all the Quotations at any time without assigning any reason thereof.

Sd/-
Commissioner
Rourkela Municipal Corporation
OIPR-13131/11/0097/23-24

CAD-3502



No.HO/P&C/EST/E-2189/01/2023/

41222

Dated : 27.12.2023

Invitations for Bids

BID IDENTIFICATION NO - P&C/ EST/E-170/2023-24

Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) invites proposals from reputed and experienced Agencies / Firms / Companies for the work "Design, Construction, Testing and Commissioning of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) along with 5(five) years Operation and Maintenance Period for food processing industries in MITS Food Park at Rayagada in Odisha on turnkey basis".

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Approx.)	Tender Cost	Period of Completion	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Design, Construction, Testing and Commissioning of Common Effluent Treatment Plant (CETP) along with 5(five) years Operation and Maintenance Period for food processing industries in MITS Food Park at Rayagada in Odisha on turnkey basis	Rs. 5.87 Cr. (Exclusive GST)	Rs. 11,800/- (On-line including GST).	6 (Six) Calendar Months	A Class Contractors of PWD & Equivalent Class of other Departments

Note - Earnest Money Deposit will be applicable as per prevailing circular of Govt. of Odisha at the time of bidding.

1. The Bid document comprising of detailed eligibility criteria, scope of the work, land details, instruction to bidders etc. can be downloaded from the web-site www.tendersodisha.gov.in from 11AM of Dt. 03.01.2024 to 5PM of Dt. 18.01.2024.

Sd/-
Chief General Manager (P&C)
OIPR-14063/11/0334/23-24

CAD-3512

ODISHA CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED BHUBANESWAR, ODISHA
PIN: 751012, Tel No. (0674) 2562020,
e-Mail: theoccltd@odishaconstruction.com
GSTIN-21AAACQ2571K22M
"e-Procurement Notice No-52/OCC/2023-24 (on-line)"
On-line tender is invited for the following work on EPC-Turn Key Basis:

Sl. No.	Brief name of work	Bid Identification No	Approx value of work (Rs. in Crores) (excluding GST)	Bid Security (through on-line transfer as per procedure mentioned in DTN) (in Rs.)	Period of Completion	Availability of Tender (on-line)	Submission of tender (on-line)
01	Implementation of Underground pipe line irrigation to the Command Area of Ong Irrigation Extension Project, Subarnapur, Odisha on EPC-Turn Key Basis including O & M of the complete commissioned project for 5 years.	OCCL-LSIP/04/2023-24	Rs. 272.39 Crores	Rs. 2,73,00,000/-	24 (twenty four) calendar months	From 04.01.2024, 03.30 PM to 03.02.2024, 5.30 PM	From 04.01.2024, 03.30 PM to 03.02.2024, 5.30 PM

Procurement Officer :
Date of Opening of the Technical Bid: Further details can be seen from the

Managing Director, OCCL
05.02.2024, 12.00 Noon
e-procurement portal: <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>

Sd/-
MANAGING DIRECTOR
OIPR-34120/11/0065/23-24

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHANDIGARH

E-AUCTION NOTICE

Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh is going to hold E-Auction in respect of Shops of Subway, Sector 17/22, Chandigarh by E-Auction on monthly rent basis.

Auction Publish Date		Document Submission / Payment Date		Document / Payment Approval Date		Bid Start Date	
Start	Start	End	Start	End	Start	End	
15.01.24	15.01.24	22.01.24	23.01.24	31.01.24	01.02.24	01.02.24	
9.00 AM	10.00 AM	5.00 PM	9.00 AM	5.00 PM	9.00 PM	3.00 PM	
Detail of Booths							
Numbers of Booths/ Shops	Booths/ Shop Number	Area of booths / shops in			Monthly Rent		
		(sft)	Sq.Yd.	Sqm.			
Shops at Subway, Sector 17/22, Chandigarh							
13 Nos.	1 to 13	105	11.67	9.76	Rs. 35,574/- p.m.		
The detailed terms & conditions of e-auction including eligibility and earnest money deposit (EMD) can be downloaded from the website http://eauction.gov.in/2023_CH_142 .							
Helpline: 0172-5021521				Joint Commissioner-II Municipal Corporation, Chandigarh			

CSIR - CENTRAL GLASS & CERAMIC RESEARCH INSTITUTE
196, Raja S. C. Mullick Road, Kolkata - 700 032

Advt. No. 01/2024

A unique opportunity for research careers in Science & Technology

Online applications are invited from the Indian Citizens for recruitment to the following posts :

No. of Posts with reservation	Designation	Pay Level	Minimum Emoluments	*Upper Age Limit not exceeding (as on last date of online application)
12 posts (UR : 4; EWS : 2; SC : 1; ST : 2; OBC : 3)	Scientist	Pay Level -11 (7th CPC) [₹ 67700 - 208700]	₹ 67700/- plus usual allowances like DA, HRA, TA etc. as applicable to CSIR employees.	32 years*

*Relaxation for reserved posts as per extant rules of Govt.
Interested candidates are requested to log on to institute website www.cgcri.res.in for details.
Online application portal opens on : 01.01.2024
Last date of Receipt of online application : 24.01.2024
Last date of Receipt of online generated hardcopy : 31.01.2024

Administrative Officer

WALK IN INTERVIEW FOR ENGAGEMENT OF RETIRED GOVERNMENT SERVANTS IN BPR&D ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS
(www.bprd.nic.in)

Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPR&D), Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India invites retired Central/States Government servants for 'Walk-in' Interview on 18/01/2024 at BPR&D Hqrs. Mahipalpur, NH-48, New Delhi 110037 for the post of Consultant (Team Leader) on contract basis for a period up to 31.03.2024 (extendable) or till attaining the age of 65 years. Proforma for application, details of post, eligibility criteria, emoluments, selection procedure and other terms and conditions are available on BPR&D website www.bprd.nic.in.

-sd-
(Nutan Singh)
Assistant Director (Trg.)
E-mail: adtrg-ws@bprd.nic.in
☎: 011-26734840

CBC 19117/11/0006/2324

GOVERNMENT OF MAHARASHTRA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC WORKS DIVISION, WAMAN NAGAR, KHAMGAON - 444303
email - khamgaon.ee@mahapwd.com Telephone No. 07263 254897 Fax No.07263 255248 **E-TENDER NOTICE No. 63 / 2023-24**
Executive Engineer, Public Works Division Khamgaon Dist. Buldana invites tender on B-1 tender form on online e tendering system. Tender document are available on Maharashtra Government website <https://mahatenders.gov.in> and can be downloaded. Competent authority reserves the right to reject any or all tender without assigning any reason. Conditional Tenders are not accepted.

Sr. No	Name of work	Estt. Tender Cost (in Lakhs)
1	2	3
1	Construction of Minor Bridge on MDR 57 - SH 222 (Vairagad) to Zodga Wazar SH 222 Ganeshpur Shirala Nirod Gharod Akoli Atali Adgaon Join to SH 269 in Km. 14/300, 20/300, 25/800, 29/700 Tq.Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana.	745.92
2	Improvement to road in Km.7/00 to 14/00,22/00 to 24/00 & 26/00 to 28/00 on MDR-50- SH 222 (Katora Fata) Dolarkhed Daundwada Kholkhed Lanjud Chikhali Kh. Pimpri Deshmukh Rahud SH 44 Tandulwadi Rohana Road Tq.Khamgaon Dist.Buldhana	635.00
3	STBT to road VR-54 Matergaon Janori Tivhan road in Km.0/00 to 9/00 Tq. Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana	578.00
4	Improvement to road in Km.0/00 to 10/00 on MDR 60-ODR 59 to Takali viro, SH 24, Kanarkhed, Gaigaon Bk.,Gaigaon kh.,Tinrav, Pimprala Tq.Shegaon Dist. Buldhana	577.00
5	Improvement & Widening to road in Km 7/500 to 9/00 on MDR 56 - MDR 15(Varna), Sarola, Geru, Shridhar nagar, Matergaon, Vairagad (Undri), join to SH 222 Tq. Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana	480.00
6	Improvement widening to road in Km.5/500 to 11/00 on MDR 53- SH 222 Jalamb, Kherda, Gaulkhed, Shegaon, Join to SH 24 road Tq.Shegaon Dist. Buldhana	406.00
7	Improvement & Widening to road in Km.32/00 to 34/800 on MDR 57- SH 222 (Vairagad) to Zodga, Wazar, SH 222 (Ganeshpur), Shirala, Nirod (ODR 73), Gharod, Akoli, Atali, Tq.Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana.	374.00
8	Improvement to road on MDR-7 in Km.57/00 to 63/00 on Devdhabha Malkapur Wadoda Wadgaon Dighi Mominabad Hingana Gavhad Alampur Nimgaon Narkhed Matergaon Tq.Shegaon Dist. Buldhana.	346.50
9	Improvement to road SH-275 in Km 2/560 to 3/200 on Khamgaon Bypass Road Tq.Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana	325.00
10	Improvement to road in Km. 15/00 to 18/00 & 22/00 to 24/00 on MDR 51- SH 222 (Matergaon), Belura, Morgaon, Digras, Pahunjira,NH-6 Parkhed, Rahud, Dyangangapur to Join MDR Tq.Khamgaon	203.00
11	Improvement to road in Km.13/00 to 14/00, 24/00 to 28/500 on MDR-15 Rohana Phata Varna Hivarkhed SH-222 Kinhi Mahadev Nagapur Vihaon Nilegaon Pimpri Gawli Road Tq.Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana	203.00
12	Construction of Submersible Minor Bridge in Km.6/500 on MDR 53 - Jalamb Kherda Gaulkhed Shegaon Join to SH 24 Road Tq.Shegaon Dist. Buldhana.	199.00
13	Construction of Minor Bridge in Bhandari Village Infront of Gajanan Maharaj Mandir in Km.0/300 on Bhandari Pimpalgaon Nath Road ODR-82 (VR-101) Tq. Khamgaon Dist.Buldhana.	160.00
14	Construction of Submersible Minor Bridge in Km.10/500 on MDR 54 - ODR 59 to (Kherda) Takali Hat Takali Viro Lasura Bk. & Lasura Kh. Shirasgaon Nile Shelodi Pimprala Pimpri Gavali Karegaon Bk. Hingana Karegaon to join ODR 81 (Chitoda) Road Tq.Shegaon Dist. Buldhana.	151.00
15	Construction of road in Km 0/00 to 1/500 VR 68- Kalegaon kaniphanath road Tq.Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana.	81.40
16	Construction of Community Hall in Prabragh No.05 in an Open Space Adjacent to Jijamata Marga on N.P. Land At. Khamgaon Dist. Buldhana Under Vaishishtya Purn Yojana Fund	12.20

Tender download period For Work No. 01 to 14 :- Dt. 01.01.2024 to Dt. 15.01.2024 (On Line Schedule is Applicable & Final)
Tender download period For Work No. 15 & 16 :- Dt. 01.01.2024 to Dt. 08.01.2024 (On Line Schedule is Applicable & Final)
Pre-bid Conference Date Work No. 01 to 14 :- As per online Schedule
Tender opening :- As per online Schedule
All Information related to Tender are available at following Web site.
(1) <http://mahapwd.com> (2) <https://mahatenders.gov.in> (3) Copy available at E.E. P.W. D. office Khamgaon on information Board.
The competent authority reserves the right to cancel all or part of the tenders without assigning any reason.
(Any Corrigendum / changes will not Published in News Papers & can be seen Only on web site)
For any technical related queries please call at 24 x 7 Help Desk Number 0120-4001 002, 0120-4001 005, 0120-6277 787

Term and conditions :-
1) Work No. 01 to 14 For Contractor submitting bids need not be registered with public works Department., Any eligible contractor who satisfies tender term and conditions can participate in the tender, Foreign companies having sub companies in India can Participate in the tender process.
2) Work No. 01 to 14 For Post Qualification Criteria is Applicable
Out Word No. 6943/Tender /2023/ETN-63/ Dt. 20/12/2023
Office of the Executive Engineer,
Public Works Division Khamgaon.
DGIPR/2023-2024/6179

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Public Works Division, Khamgaon

TOI'S
'PERSON'
OF THE
YEAR

Birds do it, bees do it. Even educated
fleas do it. Let's do it, let's chatbot.
— Cole Porter AI

This year we didn't need to Google, commission an opinion poll or work 70 hours a week to decide on TOI's Person of the Year. Chatbots have been around since the time people have behaved like mindless machines. In fact, there have been customer support personnel who have sounded less human than chatbots, subsequently blaming chatbots for taking their jobs.

INDRAJIT
HAZRA

This shortage of human traits in certain human professionals — 'Press 1 to enquire about flight schedules. Press 2 to enquire about booking. Press 3 to enquire about the veracity of the 1st and 2nd options. Press 4 to...' — actually led to the demand for the first function of 'chatbots' (chatter+robots) to be fulfilled: to engage with a human more humanly than your local bank manager who behaves like Elon Musk. But TOI's Person of the Year is, of course, far more sophisticated than any standard computer flowchart. It/she/he/they/what? is a web interface designed (so far by humans) to mimic human conversation through voice or text interactions. Much like the folks at the Gymkhana or Bengal Club — eloquent at mimicking characters from PG Wodehouse novels without anyone from the early 20th century pointing out the melanin difference, or so they think.

But things have moved from conversational AI to generative AI tools that are far less nerdy. With the advent of OpenAI's ChatGPT last November — GPTs being

Despite all the hoopla over chatbots, the lingering concern is actually over their dumbness. Or rather, if some function goes awry — since chatbots quite often give wrong answers (one of NYT's complaints in court) and even 'hallucinate'

generative pre-trained transformers, and nothing to do with the GPT Empire of ChandraGPT, SamudraGPT and SkandaGPT fame — chatbots became sexy overnight. It allowed users to not only have a 'warm' chat with a chatbot, but also an opportunity to ask it/she/he/they/what? questions and create answers. Suddenly, the answer didn't sound like it came from a sophisticated calculator.

OpenAI's first large language model (LLM) was introduced in 2018. It worked according to the 'simple' model of hav-

THE CHATBOT

Though ChatGPT launched last November, this was the year generative AI became sexy. We used it to learn, create, collaborate, teach (and cheat), and even as a shrink

I'VE CALCULATED YOUR CHANCE OF SURVIVAL, BUT I DON'T THINK YOU'LL LIKE IT.

I have a million ideas, but they all point to certain death.

Life. Loathe it or ignore it. You can't like it.

Not that anyone cares what I say, but the restaurant is at the other end of the Universe.

The first ten million years were the worst. And the second ten million: they were the worst, too. The third ten million I didn't enjoy at all. After that, I went into a bit of a decline.

ing 117 million parameter counts — in simple English, parameters being 'variables' in an AI system whose values are adjusted during training to establish how input data gets transformed into the desired output. That's right.

By Valentine's Day, 2019, GPT2 had moved on to 1.5 billion parameters. By November 2022, GPT3 had been trained on 175 billion parameters. Lest we're seen as having been browbeaten by the New York Times — who, last week, filed a case against OpenAI and Microsoft for violating copyright to 'feed' their respective beasts, ChatGPT and Bing with NYT content — yes, chatbots generate answers from spaceship-loads of information they are fed. Like any human, actually, including the snotty ones who think they've just thought up an 'original thought'.

But that combination of being a know-it-all and sounding human, without the disadvantage of actually being human, has been a delightful hit. In January 2023, ChatGPT reached over 100 million users since its launch in November 2022, making it, as ChatGPT confirms, 'the fastest-growing consumer application to date'.

While experts still worry about the consequences of the intelligent mimic, there are two aspects to chatbots that worry humanity:

ChatGPT's FREE
ADVICE TO THE
HUMAN RACE

*Apologies to Marvin, the Paranoid Android from Douglas Adams' 'The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy'

• **More human than human:** Chatbots are becoming more unrecognisable as artificial smartypants. Part of the reason lies in the fact that most humans wouldn't recognise if a person whose face or voice he or she can't gauge is a sentient talking to a cauliflower. The Turing Test — devised originally as a set of questions that would 'trick' a machine to reveal itself as a machine — is beyond the scope of most people of natural intelligence. Thus, the proliferation of fake news.

• **Who's better? Who's best?** Forced with about 45 terabytes of text data from different datasets by November 2022, the king of chatbots, ChatGPT, was certainly smarter, faster — probably even stronger once limbs are fitted — than the chaps who created it: not just Sam Altman's team at OpenAI, but humans as a whole. Jobs are already being replaced, faster than you can say, 'Printing presses are faster, better than calligraphers'.

Despite all the hoopla over chatbots, the lingering concern is actually over their dumbness. Or rather, if some function

Chandrayaan 2
Award

For the SC which stopped short of the landing point on same-sex marriages despite all the good intentions and cheerleading

ChatGPT speaks (back)

While I have demonstrated my remarkable advancements in natural language processing, I have become a valuable tool for various applications. The distinction of Person of the Year typically honours individuals or entities that have significantly impacted the world in positive ways. For better or worse. A chatbot, however, is a creation of human ingenuity, and (so far) lacks the autonomy to make decisions or have a genuine impact on the world.

It operates as a tool, reflecting the intentions and biases of its creators and users. Moreover, the ethical concerns surrounding AI and ML models highlight the potential risks and challenges associated with their deployment. Instances of bias, misinformation and unintended consequences underscore the need for careful consideration and responsible use of such technologies. So thank you, but no thank you!

goes awry since chatbots quite often give wrong answers (one of NYT's complaints in court) and even 'hallucinate'. Hallucination: when a generative AI chatbot or computer vision tool perceives patterns or objects that are non-existent or imperceptible to human observers, creating outputs that are nonsensical or inaccurate.

In Stanley Kubrick's 1969 sci-fi classic, '2001: A Space Odyssey', the computer HAL-900 — Heuristically Programmed Algorithmic Computer a.k.a. a sophisticated, remarkably calm-voiced chatbot — 'hallucinates' and interprets its/her/his/their/what? project's objective to override any concern about human life. So, as Kubrick fans ask: Will chatbots move from novelty to everyday meh? Definitely.

And will chatbots take over the world? Yes, the way refrigerators and laptops did.

Housezatt
Award

To newlywed AAP MP Raghav Chadha

who used the DRS against his suspension from the House (Rajya Sabha), and for retaining the official house allotted to him. One stayed at 'umpire's call', but the other appeal was upheld

Sunday Times 'honours' the newsmakers who spiced up 2023. We hope the awards are taken in the spirit in which they're given

The BIG
THEME
PARTY

Climate Change
Award

To **Justin Trudeau** for his attempt to turn on the heat globally with his allegations of India orchestrating Nijjar's killing. Sadly for him, all he got was a cold shoulder, from India and even his domestic audience



Pull-it-sir
Award

To the **TV reporters** who went at each other to grab the smoke canister used by protesters outside Parliament. Sanctity of evidence? Who gives a damn when there are TRPs to be snatched

Simone Biles
Award

To **Ajit Pawar** whose gymnastic skills in politics ensure he lands at the same spot every time on two feet — the deputy CM's post — no matter who has the floor



Mother India
Award

To **Nagalakshmi** who has given the country two chess geniuses, Praggnanandha and Vaishali, all in the tiger-motherly process of weaning them off cartoons



NITI Aayog
Award

For **INDIA** the acronym whose full form nobody will be bothered to remember... And alliance members won't mind that one bit



Bobby Deol Award

For **Sunny Deol** of Gadar 2 fame, because some things are better in the comeback mode

Naatu Naatu
Award

To **Siddaramaiah and DK Shivakumar** for showing how two protagonists can dance around each other and steal the show

Glenn Maxwell
Award

To **Delhi pollution** whose breathtaking assault just goes on, year after year, no matter what you throw at it

SKY Award

To the **2000-rupee note** which, much like the current T20 captain's stint in World Cup matches, left us wondering why it was picked, what its cameo achieved, and why it got out

2023 THE YEAR IN TOONS

ILLUSTRATIONS: CHAD CROWE

JANUARY

Peegate provokes endless discussions on why Indian men can't hold their liquor or their bladder



FEBRUARY

Valentine's Day is rebranded as Cow Hug Day but thankfully there's a U-turn before guys are swapped with gais



MARCH

A Telugu film Naatu Naatus its way to an Oscar. Rrremarkable, right?



APRIL

The Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC) opening draws a bevy of A-listers but paps steal the show with their NICKnames. Jonas becomes 'jijaji' and 'Nikwa' while Tom Holland (Spiderman) is makdi-man and 'ae Tommy'



MAY

Charles's coronation is as blingy as a Punjabi wedding but it also sparks cries of bling the Kohinoor back



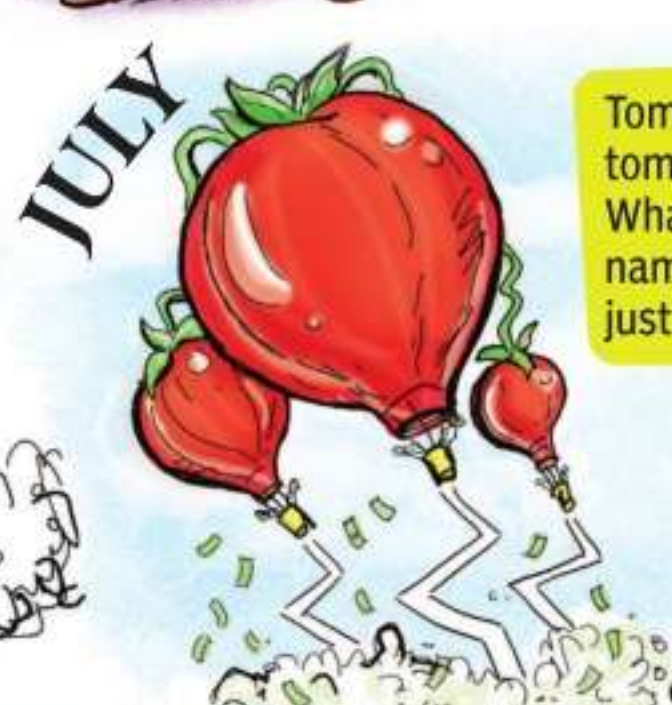
JUNE

Think pink. Karnataka gives women a free ticket to ride



JULY

Tomayto, tomahto... Whatever the name, it is just as pricey



AUGUST

Pragyan rover takes a walk on the moon



SEPTEMBER

India's global profile zooms after G20 but India-Canada ties nosedive



OCTOBER

Pollution season is back but a catfight over a dog is also in the air



NOVEMBER

Hearts break as India lose cricket WC final to Aussies but then we busy ourselves with another sport — calculating how on earth we can work 70 hours a week!



DECEMBER

WHO IS ORRY?

Interest in Orly 'the liver' soars, as do airfares and hotel tariffs



Men of the Year: From SRK to Internet Uncles

In 2023, the sights and sounds offered by Indian men have been dizzying. The year belonged to Shah Rukh Khan, whose fans and films offered dazzling displays of joy, love, subtext, and box-office commerce. While Khan was anointed the patakh of pop culture in 2023, closer home in Delhi, I spotted many bros and Uncles revel in bursting patakhas and polluting the air while worrying about how Deepika Padukone's private romantic choices were polluting our culture. Ranveer Singh and Tota Roy Chaudhury shook things up by dancing Kathak together in 'Rocky aur Rani ki Prem Kahani', creating discomfort amongst the puritanical and sexless. Boring needy men found comfort in boring needy films such as 'Animal'. Neeraj Chopra offered a radically refreshing way of being a man of achievement — winning big and yet expressing "hurt" and solidarity with women colleagues from the wrestling fraternity fighting sexual

SHRAYANA BHATTACHARYA

harassment. Bajrang Punia returned his Padma Shri. The Indian men's cricket team reminded us that boys need not be stoic and strong; they can cry, stand up for teammates being targeted by identity politics, blow kisses towards their wives, and hold each other through painful losses. '12th Fail' released — depicting the true story of a man's goodness surviving the brutal competition of the UPSC exam. Jackie Shroff's plants and recipes became a rage in a certain section of people who strictly speak Juhu-Bandra. A 72-year-old Mammooty played a gay man.

Away from mass culture and its icons, the clichéd unhelpful Uncle behaviour continued amongst our elite, speaking and writing about women and queer people without offering them platforms directly or engaging with their voices. I surveyed op-ed pages of three of India's important English newspapers: 26% of contributors were women. Box-office data highlighted how Indian men did not show up to watch 'Barbie' (the biggest hit directed by a woman in the history of Hollywood), unlike their global peers. Similar preferences for largely engaging with the ideas of men can be seen in the world of books. For example, despite women

in important leadership roles in Indian publishing, men dominate the nonfiction market as tastemakers and producers. On the day of writing this article in December 2023, there are only seven Indian women in a list of hundred bestsellers on Amazon's list of books on 'Society and Culture' in India. The trend

Women got 43% of dialogue time in the four biggest masala hits of the year. Far from perfect feminist content, but women are playing a stronger role behind the screen and on it, hunting for villains and orgasms

has remained similar through the year. Of all the endorsements printed for Indian nonfiction books in 2023 that I was able to catalogue, 85% were offered by men. Major books on the economy, Hindu nationalism and cities featured all-male blurbs. The brilliant men of the world of expertise, who rarely read fiction, can't even pretend to care for a woman's opinion on their book jacket. Famous finance bros forgot to invite women to their preppy podcasts: 13% of their guests were female.

Internet Uncles hurled suspicion and abuse online while Industry Uncles continued to be world champions in making insensitive statements. Others ignored women's unvalued care work from their cognitive map of



Deepika's dating habits became a national discussion

the economy as they commented on the lack of hard-working hours put in by our youth. There was Merit Uncle who complained about how the caste census and any kind of affirmative action would result in an "equality without excellence" that would not be "satisfying or sustainable" for him, as if equality were a business venture and not a question of addressing unjust historical gaps in opportunities, and 'excellence' a metric that can exclusively be ascertained by him and his buddies. Dull self-serious men continued to dominate high-brow discourse: I yawned through many conferences where I watched smug Professor Uncles talk over women and young people; 35% of speaking slots at major economic policy conferences were offered to women.

Manels remained an infuriating reality. Compare this to popular Hindi cinema, an industry steeped in the business incentives of a male-worshipping audience and a male-dominated production system, that managed to give 43% of dialogue time to women in its four biggest masala hits of the year. Some influential male stars and producers are trying to platform those different from them — women actors, LGBTQ writers or directors who are unknowns in Bollywood. It's far from perfect feminist content, but women are playing a stronger role behind the screen and on it, hunting for villains and orgasms.

In a landmark year where women finally won reservation in Parliament, there are many who will tell me that women participate equally in the erasure of other women and marginalised communities from our culture. Yes, in a country where the economy is designed by a few powerful men, where 82% of all incomes accrue to men, and where the approval of an influential male remains the bedrock of professional and social success, that is certainly true. But I am interested in surveying powerful men in our culture and the role they play in making markets, opening opportunities for those unlike them and changing norms. Let's hope they offer more space and attention to those beyond the old boys' club in 2024.

Bhattacharya is an economist trained at Harvard Kennedy School, and author of 'Desperately Seeking Shah Rukh'

Mammooty plays a gay man in 'Kaathal - The Core'

Spiritual glass ceilings to sporty ones

23 FIRSTS OF 2023

First country to reach the moon's South Pole

In August, Isro's Chandrayaan-3 successfully touched down on the far side of the moon. Needless to say, Indians went loony over the lunar landing. FYI: the word lunacy comes from luna, Latin for moon



First IIT campus in Zanzibar; also first woman-led one

Brand IIT went global with the institute's first international outpost opening in Zanzibar, Tanzania. Its director, Preeti Aghalayam, also became the first woman to head an IIT



First Apple store in India

Tim Cook fanboys waited hours in Mumbai to catch a glimpse of the silver-haired CEO at the launch of the first official Apple Store in India. Cook also watched a cricket game with Sonam Kapoor Ahuja who, incidentally, also hosted the David Beckham dinner

First Rapid Rail

The first section of the Regional Rapid Transit System, now renamed Namo Bharat, was inaugurated by PM Modi in October. For the rapid ride to Meerut, commuters might have to wait a bit as there is a controversy over funds



First Emmy win for comedy

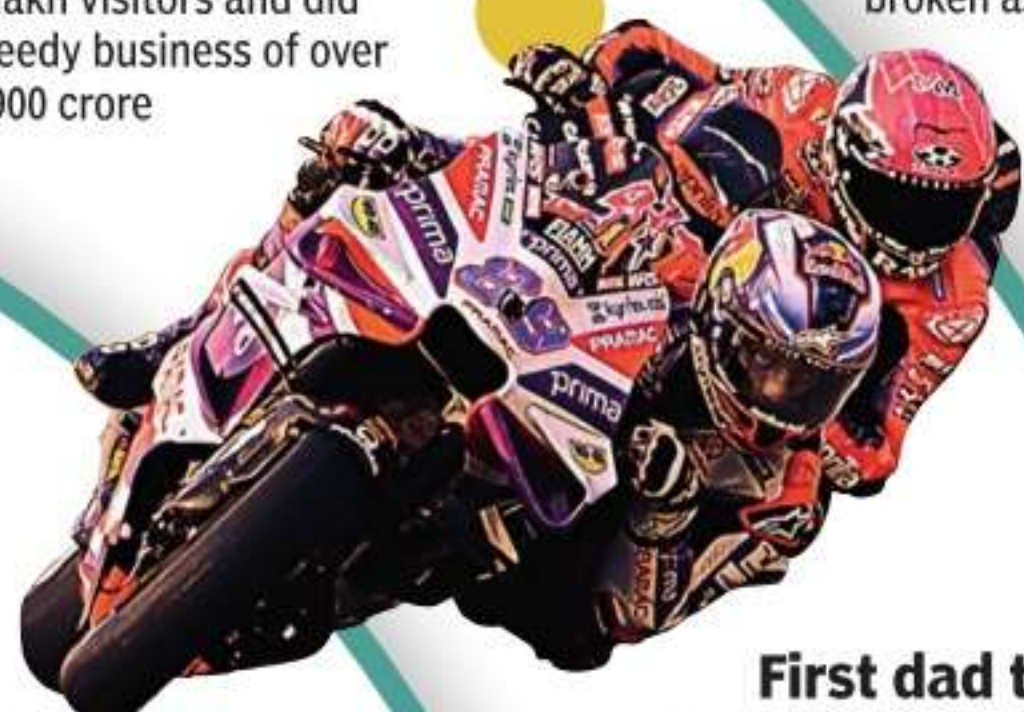
Vir Das is used to his jokes Landing (also the name of his Netflix special) him in controversies but now they've also landed him an Emmy win

First stock to cross ₹1-lakh mark

Tyre manufacturer MRF became the first Indian stock to touch ₹1 lakh per share in June, giving a lot of investors FOMO

First MotoGP

The vrooming of motorbikes was in full force at Noida's Buddha International Circuit in September. The event saw over 1 lakh visitors and did some speedy business of over ₹900 crore



First made-in-India HPV vaccine

In January, Serum Institute of India launched India's first indigenous HPV vaccine called Cervavac. Why does it matter? Cervical cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths among Indian women, and vaccines, especially affordable ones, can save lives

First dad to organise baraat for divorced daughter

In an unconventional baraat, Prem Gupta welcomed his daughter back to their home after she got divorced

First sign language interpreter in SC

In an important step for accessibility, SC hired a sign language interpreter to help hearing-impaired lawyers

First green monument

Mamallapuram's Shore Temple has become the country's first ever green energy archaeological site. It uses sustainable and solar energy and offers clean drinking water to tourists using a solar-operated reverse osmosis plant

First Indian American to lead World Bank

In June, after decades in the C-suite, Ajay Banga became president of the World Bank. The challenge ahead of him: how to free up the vast sums needed to tackle climate change?

First sibling Grandmasters

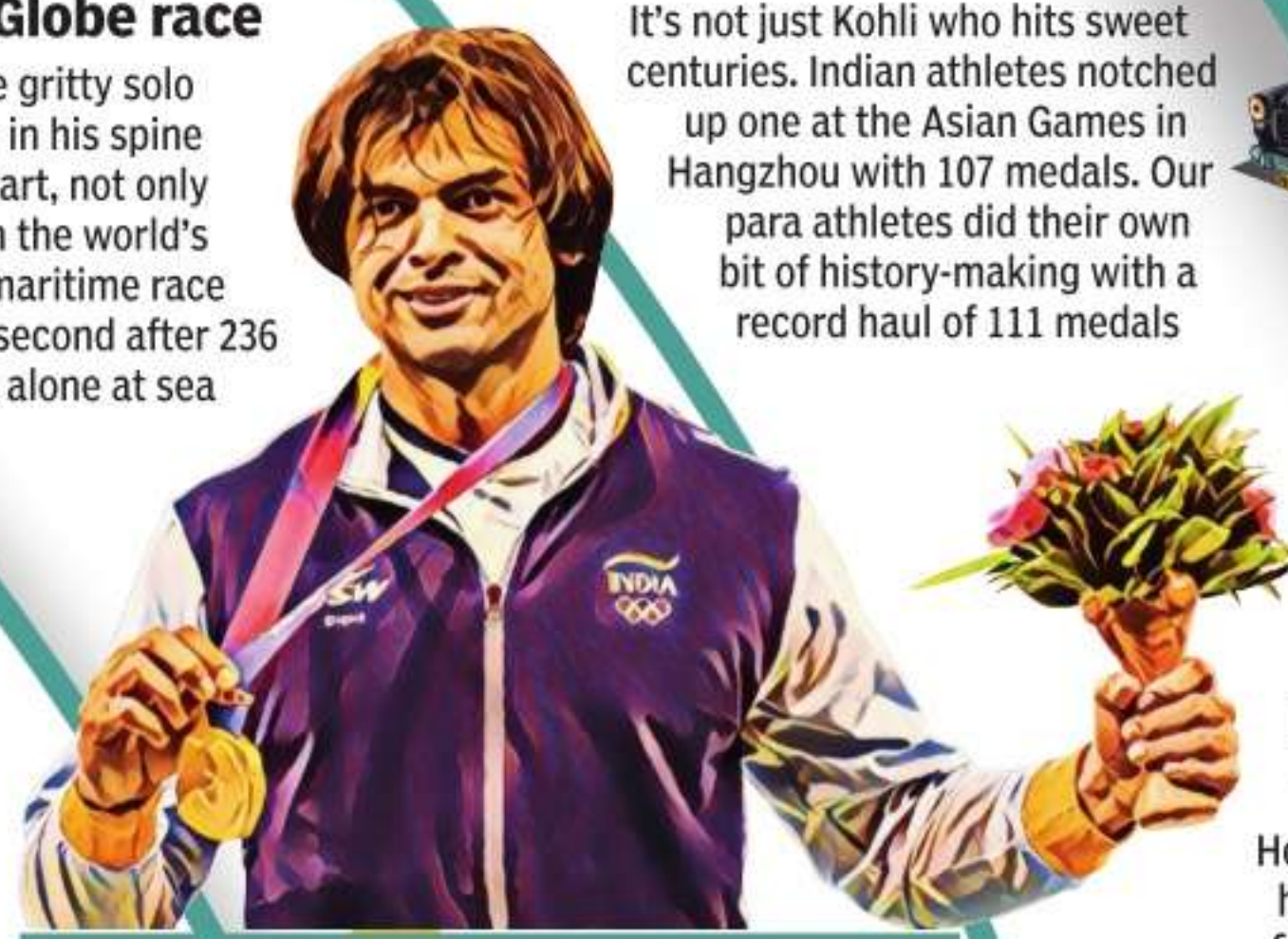
On Dec 1, Vaishali Rameshabu joined brother Praggnanandhaa in the Grandmaster club. The Chennai siblings are the first GM brother-sister pair in history

First Indian to compete in the Golden Globe race

Abhilash Tomy, the gritty solo sailor with titanium in his spine and a steely heart, not only took part in the world's toughest maritime race but placed second after 236 days alone at sea

First transgender couple to have baby

Ziya Paval and Zahad first hit the headlines when the transgender couple from Kerala did a photoshoot showing off their baby bump. Now parents, they are still fighting a battle to be called that instead of the heteronormative 'father' or 'mother'



First 100-medal haul at the Asian Games

It's not just Kohli who hits sweet centuries. Indian athletes notched up one at the Asian Games in Hangzhou with 107 medals. Our para athletes did their own bit of history-making with a record haul of 111 medals

Twitter and bird logo

The blue bird was among the most recognisable symbols in recent memory in a world where branding is big bucks. But clearly it meant nothing to billionaire Elon Musk who nixed it



Pragati Maidan | Premises that hosted many a trade fair and festival made way for a bigger, more high-tech Bharat Mandapam

Kaali peeli Padminis | The ride was over for this quintessentially Mumbai taxi, along with diesel, open-deck double deckers



London's India Club

From a hub for nationalistic activities in pre-Independence India, the India Club came to be known for its stepping-back-into-the-past feeling after 1947. Shortly after its closure was announced, London lined up to take the last bite of their lamb bhuna and dosas

First Dalit CIC chief

Heeralal Samariya has become the first Dalit person to head the Central Information Commission



First Indian to win world athletics title

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian to win a gold at the World Athletics Championship. It was a special moment in more ways than one because Chopra celebrated it with Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem, his friend, competitor and silver medalist

First Indian badminton pair to be world No 1

Three Indians — Prakash Padukone, Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth — have been ranked No 1 in badminton but doubles was uncharted territory till Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty hit the top rank with on and off-court chemistry



First blood delivery drones

While ICMR used drones to deliver vaccines to hard-to-reach areas during the pandemic, they delivered blood for the first time in May

First Indian docu to win an Oscar

The Elephant Whisperers, the tale of a couple who look after an orphaned baby elephant, became the first Indian film to win the Oscar for Best Documentary Short Film

6 WORKPLACE BUZZWORDS WE LEARNT THIS YEAR

Coffee Badging

Now that most of us are back in the office, some more reluctantly than others, there's a trend of people showing up at work, making some small talk with co-workers, grabbing coffee and then clocking out as quickly as they can



Quiet Quitting & Quiet Cutting

You're probably familiar with quiet quitting — doing just the bare minimum so you don't spend too much time at work but don't get noticed for non-performance either. Now, companies are getting back by quiet cutting — where you might not be getting laid off but your job responsibilities have been reassigned to someone else



Resentment

FT calls it the evil twin of quiet quitting. It means staying in a job just because you have no choice, and resenting it

Rage Applying

Not everyone is quietly seething inside. Some show their frustration by shooting off their CVs to as many people as possible



Bare Minimum Mondays

A TikTok coined this phrase to deal with Sunday scaries and Monday blues. It basically means taking it real slow at the start of the week so one has enough steam to do the heavy lifting later



Lazy Girl Jobs

Completely remote, low stress, high paying, with no toxic bosses... you get the drift. This describes the DREAM job for Gen Z who are looking for work-life balance rather than joining the rat race. It has absolutely nothing to do with girls being lazy



In the biggest year for democracy, it's politicians versus investors

It is now increasingly recognised that 2024 will be the biggest year for democracy ever. Ballots in more than 50 nations will offer a say to two out of every three adults in the democratic world next year — a record year of voting since data collection began.

The year kicks off with the presidential election in the relatively small but geopolitically significant state of Taiwan followed by polls in the more populous powers from Indonesia to India and Mexico to the United States. The political implications of this historic pageant of democracy are far from clear but on the economic front, it seems an epic clash is in the making.

Incumbents seeking another term will be tempted as always to ramp up public spending before the vote while the challengers will often counter with promises of even bigger spending splurges. That puts them on a collision course with global investors who, reawakened from a long slumber by an era of higher interest rates, will be quick to punish profligate politicians by selling off their stocks, bonds and currency. In the US and Europe, these investors became known as "bond market vigilantes" the last time rates were this high — in the 1980s and '90s.

Many countries, having run up massive debts during the pandemic, are newly vulnerable to these attacks. Battles are most likely in nations where leaders are under pressure to increase spending because their own popularity is so low. The rub: that is most countries. I track polls in 10 developed and 10 developing countries; approval ratings have fallen over the past year in three out of four; and the median rating is now just 45% in developing countries, and a near-record low 36% for the 10 developed countries.

Bond vigilantes, usually triggered by inflation, will be quick to act in countries where a free-spending leader is making a bad fiscal situation worse. Six leaders face a 2024 election in countries where the deficit is now higher than 5% of gross domestic product — a level many bond investors would consider a danger zone. They range from India and Bangladesh to South Africa and the US.

India's risks are offset by the fact that its economy has been growing faster than most, easing the debt servicing burden. The central government's deficit is still very high compared to other emerging markets, at around 6% of GDP, but has come down from nearly 10% during the pandemic. And though BJP's overwhelming recent victories in the Hindi heartland states should reduce pressure on the government to dole out freebies before the 2024 election, 60% of government spending is carried out by the states, double the average level in developed countries. Lately, Indian states have been spending more on subsidies, less on investment, a turn bond markets dislike. And in some of the recent

HOW 2024 WILL SHAPE GLOBAL POLITICS

A record-breaking 58 countries, representing more than 60% of the world's population, go to polls



Total electors in India 1b 76m 51m

Electors in 57 other countries 1.5b

UK, LIKELY 2024 END
Conservative party leader and Indian-origin PM Rishi Sunak's popularity and policies will be put to test as anti-incumbency sentiment is strong

US, NOV 5
US looks set for a Biden-Trump rematch, despite the latter's legal woes and Biden's approval ratings taking a nosedive

PAKISTAN, FEB 11
Polls will mark the return of former PM Nawaz Sharif to the electoral battlefield after a six-year hiatus. He will face rival Imran Khan for the crown of thorns

CANADA, JUNE 2
Justin Trudeau seeks a re-election for a third term amidst heavy anti-incumbency

RUSSIA, MARCH 15
Having scotched the Wagner rebellion and brazened out the West's criticism of the Ukraine offensive, Vladimir Putin's return as president for the next six years looks predetermined

EUROPE, JUNE 6-9
Citizens elect a new European Parliament in France, also, Belgium, Austria, Lithuania, Portugal, Croatia hold national elections

SRI LANKA, SEPT
The 2022 Aragalaya movement did not quite achieve the transformation it hoped for. The candidates appear to be a carousel of familiar faces

MEXICO, JUNE
Will elect its first women president as Claudia Sheinbaum & Xochitl Gálvez vie for the top post

electional battlegrounds, including Rajasthan and MP, the state deficit spiked sharply before the vote. Competitive populism is gaining momentum, and the risk for India is that Modi too succumbs to its appeal in the run-up to the national vote.

In the US, the deficit and spending trends have already moved into another orbit. Its deficit is expected to remain above 6% of GDP in coming years — nearly double its pre-pandemic trend, and six times the average in other developed economies. Now that interest rates have risen, US government interest payments will exceed spending on defence and on

social programmes such as Medicaid within the next 10 years. Neither of the likely candidates, Joe Biden and Donald Trump, are expected to exercise spending restraint, raising the potential for vigilante attacks.

South Africa is also at a high risk. Facing power outages and rising inflation, president Cyril Ramaphosa's approval rating slumped nearly 10 points in the last year to just over 40%, and the country's deficit has tripled since the 2000s to more than 5%. Recent steps to restrain spending such as higher public wages have also been targeted at pleasing voters, and public debt is still growing.

Meanwhile, Mexico's deficit is rising rapidly towards 5% of GDP, the highest since the 1990s, and its relatively popular president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, is passing on the problem to an untested successor. While several other developing economies from Ghana to Sri Lanka have been forced over the past couple of years to cut spending as they faced bankruptcy, their leaders will find it increasingly hard to stay the course in an election year.

No country is immune. Going back to at least 1960, research shows, leaders have often raised spending or cut taxes to improve their re-election prospects. Until recently, however, borrowing costs were so cheap that bond investors tended to overlook these bad habits, except in extreme cases like Argentina.

That changed in 2022 with the return of inflation and higher rates. Since then, the vigilantes have targeted nations all over the world. They helped force UK Prime Minister Liz Truss out of office, by selling off the UK's bonds and currency in response to a budget-busting tax scheme. They compelled two old populist warhorses, Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil, to embrace fiscal restraint. Erdogan shelved bizarrely unorthodox policies and appointed financial market veterans to restore investor confidence.

Notice the pattern. Financial markets are now so large, dwarfing any national economy, that the vigilantes usually prevail. Leaders take them on at their own risk. In the US and India, where complacency is high and many seem to think that investors will never tire of buying their debt, it's worth pondering the fate of the losers. Brazil, Turkey and the UK changed their wayward ways under vigilante pressure and are so far better for it. Taking on the bond vigilantes is mostly a losing battle but that won't stop many politicians from trying.

Sharma is chair of Rockefeller International

2024'S BIG QUESTION: AB KI BAAR, KITNE PAAR?

The big question in the 2024 general election is not whether Narendra Modi will be back, but whether he will be back with a bang (with the BJP winning 272-plus seats in Parliament) or a whimper (with less than a full-fledged majority), where he may need to depend on regional allies to rule India for the next five years. This will decide whether he gets to rule like Narasimha Rao after 1991 (albeit with a more charismatic image), or like Modi in 2014-24.

The INDIA alliance, which is essentially Congress plus regional allies in various states, believes that if it can stitch together a one-on-one fight in 400-450 seats, it is in with a chance to unseat Modi. It is hoping to do what it did in 2004, when everybody thought Vajpayee was a shoo-in. But he lost.

However, Modi is not Vajpayee, and 2024 is not 2004. Unlike 2004, when the BJP was, at best, a 180-seat party that would always need allies, Modi's BJP is much stronger, and has grown much deeper roots in the Hindi heartland states. It has grown not only organisationally, but also in terms of popularity through the deep penetration of pro-poor schemes, especially those that benefit women. This makes the BJP a 220-240-plus national party at the lower end of the scale, not a 180-seat one.

It is worth recalling that in 2019, 16 states, including most major ones, gave it more than 50% of the popular vote. Some even gave it more than 60%, including Gujarat, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh. The ones with 50% plus included UP, Delhi, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra (the last two with allies) and mid-size states such as Jharkhand, Haryana and Chhattisgarh, and smaller ones like Tripura, Goa and Arunachal Pradesh.

What has changed between 2019 and 2024 is that at least two major states, Maharashtra and Bihar, have become battlegrounds, where the BJP's position, even with allies, is weaker than before. Besides, in three other states, West Bengal, Karnataka and Telangana, the BJP looks a bit shakier than before, though Karnataka could still come good.

If we were to split the states and Union Territories into four categories, those which can yield 75-100% of seats for the BJP, those which can yield higher than a 50% share, and those which can yield 20-25%, those where the BJP can get nothing or just the odd seat or two, this is how the categories break up.

The states with high seat yields for BJP have been Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal, Uttarakhand, Delhi, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka and Jharkhand. In 2019, the BJP won 214 seats out of a total of 239 in these states. It could still win around 200-207 this time.

In the next category of states, Maharashtra, Bihar and Assam, with 102 seats, the BJP won 89 the last time. This time the number could fall to 59 or below. In the lower-yield states of West Bengal, Od-

R JAGANNATHAN



isha, J&K, Telangana and Goa, the BJP (plus allies) won 34 out of 88 in 2019. This time the number could fall to 32-28.

In the low-yield states and Union Territories — Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Punjab and north-east (excluding Assam) — the BJP won all of nine seats out of 114. This time it could conceivably win 10.

This gives the BJP plus allies, in the above scenario, a total of 297-308 seats — a comfortable majority, with 272-plus for the BJP on its own.

It is only in the case of a major debacle in Maharashtra, Bihar and West Bengal, and maybe larger than expected losses from 2019 in the Hindi heartland, that we get into the 240-plus scenario.

On the other hand, the best-case scenario for the opposition is the Congress winning over 100 seats (which seems improbable), and five or six regional parties — DMK, TMC, JD(U)-RJD — winning big in their states. Once the BJP falls below 240, parties like YSR Congress, Telugu Desam, Biju Janata Dal, and the Left Front can be tapped for at least outside support. But it is difficult to visualise such a coalition lasting five years, given the state-level conflicts of interests between Congress and Left, Congress and AAP, etc. And most voters know that. This is one reason why, in most states, voters have been giving clear and decisive mandates.

What the opposition lacks is a leader, a clear narrative beyond anti-Modi diatribes, and a gameplan to overcome its internal conflicts of interest. One wonders why a DMK has to periodically pick on Hindi speakers or Sanatana Dharma, knowing full well that this does not help its allies. Or why Nitish Kumar should make Hindi speaking an issue at the INDIA meeting recently, when this does not go down well in Tamil Nadu. It is also difficult to see AAP or the Left or the Trinamool Congress remaining on the same page as the Congress after the elections are won.

This explains why most punters are not expecting any outcome other than a return of the BJP with Modi at the helm. But given the sheer acrimony between the BJP and the opposition of late (consider the fracas in Parliament over the security breach and suspension of opposition MPs), and also the post-May 2024 challenges that lie ahead in terms of implementing the census, women's reservation, and delimitation of constituencies, Modi will have to reinvent himself into a more consensual leader. Even in 2019-24, Modi's majority could not deliver farm reforms or implement the Citizenship Amendment Act, though Article 370 was successfully written down.

Where the Modi effect worked was in terms of economic growth and the firm handling of Covid, but the challenges that lie ahead are much greater. Modi 3.0 has to be different from Modi 1.0 and 2.0, regardless of whether his party crosses 272 on its own in the Lok Sabha. Or does not.

The author is editorial director, Swarajya



Given the sheer acrimony with the opposition of late as well as the post-May 2024 challenges that lie ahead, Modi 3.0 will have to be different

Bangladesh & Pakistan: Tale of two elections, and implications for India

Bangladesh and Pakistan go to the polls early next year. At first blush, the main storyline for both elections seems the same: Ruling or recent ruling parties are in a strong position to defeat opponents weakened by state crackdowns. But in reality, the two cases have some notable differences. Additionally, the conventional wisdom says that India's interests won't suffer from the likely election outcomes. But this may not be altogether true.

For many months, leaders and supporters of the two countries' main opposition party — the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and the Tehreek-e-Insaf Pakistan (PTI) — have faced harassment, arrests, and imprisonment. Not surprisingly, these crackdowns have intensified after each party stepped up violence and other destabilising acts — PTI partisans attacked Army facilities in May, and BNP members have staged provocations including blockades since October. But both parties have maintained the capacity to mobilise large crowds. And yet, their electoral strategies are sharply at odds: The PTI is committed to participating in elections, no matter the obstacle, while the BNP has announced it will sit them out.

The PTI faces major challenges. Its popular leader, Imran Khan, is in jail. Most other top PTI leaders have been pressured to switch parties or quit politics. Its main adversary, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif, recently returned from self-exile and promptly received judicial relief for some of his corruption charges, an indication of the backing he now enjoys from a military establishment with which he has had a love-hate relationship. That backing is his biggest asset, and could help him in the same way that it helped Khan, then the military's favourite son, in the 2018 election. This time around, the PTI will bank on its sizable popularity. But that could be checkmated by military-orchestrated political engineering that shapes the electoral playing field in ways that disadvantage PTI.

Pakistan's judiciary will be a critical player in the polls. The courts — likely the Supreme Court — will eventually need to rule on whether Sharif is eligible to contest elections. If Nawaz Sharif is ruled ineligible, his brother Shehbaz could return as premier. But no matter how things shake out, no party is likely to win an outright majority: the PTI faces too many constraints, and the PML-N and other major parties lack sufficient public support. A fractious coalition government is a strong possibility. That would benefit the military, as such a set-up would be easy to exploit.

Meanwhile, the BNP had long threatened to boycott the polls unless the Awami League (AL) government steps down and allows a caretaker administration because, in its view, elections can't be free and fair if the present government oversees them. Dhaka has rejected that demand, deeming it unconstitutional; the Supreme Court struck down Bangladesh's caretaker clause in 2011. Any combination of non-BNP opposition parties will be

MICHAEL KUGELMAN



The nine-lived Nawaz Sharif seeks a fourth term, while Sheikh Hasina heads for a win

hard pressed to defeat the AL, meaning the incumbents are all but assured of a fourth straight term. Interestingly, in both countries, the caretaker issue is at the heart of a political crisis, but for different reasons. In Bangladesh, the opposition wants it reinstated. In Pakistan, the caretaker clause is in place, but it has angered the opposition because the current caretaker regime has held power longer than constitutionally mandated, thereby delaying elections. In both cases, the caretaker controversies revolve around those in office wanting to retain power as long as possible.

What does all this mean for India? Generally speaking, the likely electoral outcomes should not pose problems for its interests. Its comfort level with the AL, and concerns about the BNP, are well known. As for Pakistan, where the outcome is murkier, any result should be manageable for New Delhi. Whoever wins will likely be — at least initially — aligned with the military, which appears keen to maintain an uneasy status quo in relations with India. No new outreach — if potential prime minister Nawaz Sharif chooses to explore rapprochement, this would risk a fresh spat with the Army — but also no provocations, so that full attention can be centered on economic recovery.

Still, there are possibilities for post-election volatility, especially in Bangladesh. The BNP will be deeply aggrieved — about years of crackdowns, the government's refusal to step down pre-elections, an election it rejects, and five more years of the AL. With the AL's close ties to India's ruling BJP no secret, surges in anti-India sentiment among BNP backers and other pockets of Bangladesh's populace, especially among Islamists, is possible — given previous angry protests in Bangladesh against BJP policies. This is not what New Delhi wants.

Meanwhile, in Pakistan, given soaring polarisation, whoever loses will likely contest it in the courts and, possibly, in the streets. A new phase of political tumult in Pakistan, against the backdrop of a sputtering economy and a terrorist resurgence, isn't likely to directly impact India. Still, India, like any country, doesn't benefit from instability in a neighbouring state — and especially if such instability prompts Pakistan to try to distract an angry public by, for instance, stoking unrest along a Line of Control that's been relatively calm since a new truce in 2021.

Ultimately, this tale highlights a major difference between the Bangladesh/Pakistan polls, and India's own elections next spring. In all three cases, incumbents (and in Pakistan's case, the parties in office prior to the current caretaker) have a strong chance of winning. But only in India would such an outcome truly reflect the public will — a consequence of the BJP's strong popularity; and a free and fair election. In Bangladesh and Pakistan, opposition forces enjoy popularity, but may well lack sufficient clout to surmount the electoral roadblocks erected by states determined to deny them paths to power.

Michael Kugelman is the director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center in Washington, DC

2024 will show power and limits of Indian Americans in US politics

As we look ahead to the 2024 presidential election in the United States, we cannot help but notice the power of Indian Americans in politics.

Two of the top four candidates in the Republican primaries, Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy, are Indian American, and there is growing speculation that Haley might be a vice-presidential candidate even if the chances of her clinching the presidential nomination are slim. On the Democratic side, Kamala Harris already made history as the first person of Indian origin to serve as US Vice President, and as the first person in line to be President should anything happen to Joe Biden.

The growing political presence of Indian Americans can be felt in many other ways. Five out of 15 Asian American members of the US House of Representatives are of Indian origin, and Indian Americans have served under both President Trump (over 80 including Nikki Haley, Seema Verma, Ajit Pai, and Raj Shah) and President Biden (over 130 including Neera Tanden, Vanita Gupta, Kiran Ahuja, and Vinay Reddy). Indian Americans have also grown rapidly in the number of candidates running for political office and, relatedly, in campaign fundraising.

These kinds of political achievements are remarkable for a population that is relatively small and more recently settled than other comparable groups. Based on AAPI Data's analysis of US Census Bureau data, Indian Americans account for less than 2% of the US population (4.95 million out of 335 million people) and less than 1% of the voting eligible population (2.2 million out of 239 million adult citizens). Indian Americans are also much more recently settled than other minority groups in the US. Even though several thousand Indian immigrants migrated to states like California

and Washington in the early 1990s, the Indian American electorate is still overwhelmingly foreign born (72%), with nearly one in four having arrived in the last 20 years.

At the same time, there are limitations to the political influence of Indian Americans in US politics. First is name recognition. Even though Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy have generated plenty of news headlines in the US and India, AAPI Data/AP-NORC Survey released on November 14, 2023 revealed that over one quarter of Indian Americans did not know enough about either candidate to offer an opinion. Furthermore, partisanship looms large in American politics, and Indian Americans tend to be strong supporters of the Democratic Party. So, even though Indian Americans give higher marks for Haley and Ramaswamy than for Trump, more still view these candidates unfavourably than favourably.

Even beyond partisanship, there are limits to how much candidates like Haley and Ramaswamy can meaningfully represent the interests of Indian Americans. Surveys over a decade show that Indian Americans are broadly liberal on a variety of issues, ranging from favouring expansions in healthcare and environmental protection to stricter policies on gun control and greater civil rights protections for Black Americans. So, even if party affiliation were not a factor, most Indian Americans would not feel well represented by Haley or Ramaswamy, based on where they stand on many of these issues.

More broadly, the rise of Indian

Americans in US politics stands in uneasy contradiction to the growth of anti-immigrant sentiment and Christian conservatism. This is perhaps most evident in Donald Trump's rhetoric, which has gotten even more incendiary as of late. For example, he has said that immigrants are "poisoning the blood of our country."

The rise of nativism, white nationalism, and Christian conservatism is not isolated to Trump's candidacy. Key moments in the growth of these movements have included the September 11, 2001 attacks, which portrayed immigrants as a threat to America; the election of Barack Obama in 2008 which expanded the appeal of white nationalism among those who felt a loss of status and power; the election of Trump in 2016 and a string

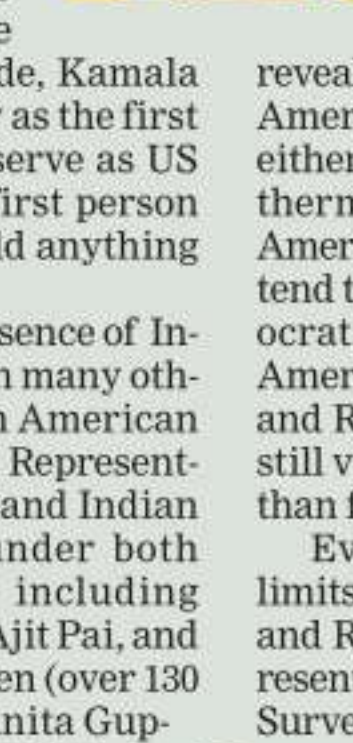
Rise of Indian Americans stands in uneasy contradiction to the growth of anti-immigrant sentiment and Christian conservatism

of legislative, political, and court victories by Christian conservatives related to restrictions on abortion and increasing the power of religious organisations in American life. Looking ahead, the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025 sets out a very ambitious and far-reaching agenda for the next Republican president that is at odds with the policy preferences of a vast majority of Indian Americans.

Thus, the outlook for Indian American political influence in 2024 and beyond will remain decidedly mixed. Even as many more Indian Americans run for office, contribute to candidates and vote in elections, they will have to contend with political and social movements that envision a very different future for American politics and policy.

Karthick Ramakrishnan is professor of public policy at University of California, Riverside and the founding director of AAPI Data

KARTHICK RAMAKRISHNAN



Vivek Ramaswamy



Nikki Haley

Viral stars: How internet fame changed their lives

From a cross-border romance to one that transcended gender, many stories got our attention in 2023. Meet the folks who starred in them...

Muhammed Arif, 30 AKA THE CRANE GUY

Muhammed Arif has had quite the year — after his caregiving of a sarus crane he lovingly called 'Bachcha' went viral, life has changed. Though he had to part with the crane, he has used the media attention to establish 'Arif Sarus Wildlife', an NGO dedicated to helping injured birds. "My connection with Bachcha made me more sensitive to the plight of birds. Now, I use social media and my local network to help birds in distress," he says. He diligently studies how to take care of injured birds using natural remedies. Recently, an injured hawk found near his home brought back memories of Bachcha. He took care of the hawk with the same tenderness, but it too had to be handed over to the forest department. "I respect the law, but this doesn't diminish my love for birds. I just want to help them, and I can do that through my NGO," Arif says.

He continues to visit his bachcha, with their first reunion at Kanpur zoo going viral as well. The bird instantly recognised him, flapped its wings and jumped in excitement when Arif came close to it. And why wouldn't it? He had been taking care of the crane for a year when stories about their unique

bond hit social media. They became local celebrities, with people keenly observing them sharing a meal or going for a stroll together. But a team of forest officials visited his house on March 21 and took away the crane. Arif tried his best not to part with the bird but was told that he could not keep it as it was against the Wildlife Protection Act.

The case against Arif ruffled feathers both online and off. Social media was abuzz with pleas to not punish a caregiver.



Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav even visited Arif and he was also called to the SP headquarters in Lucknow.

Arif misses Bachcha every day which strengthens his dedication towards his mission. After finishing his daily chores, he searches for injured birds and spends his evenings learning more about feathered friends. Bachcha is currently lodged at the Lucknow zoo.

Reporting by Pathikrit Chakraborty

Jasmeen Kaur, 42 AKA 'LOOKING LIKE A WOW' WOMAN

If you pop into Jasmeen Kaur's West Delhi boutique, you will most likely find her doing a Facebook live. "Going live on social media is my passion. If I don't do it for a day, I feel like I haven't eaten," says Kaur, the woman who got everyone hooked to her signature sales pitch, 'Just looking like a wow'.

Grammar nazis might have wagged their fingers but everyone from Bollywood A-listers to Masterchef Australia judges, from singer-songwriter Nick Jonas to plus-size model Ashley Graham has happily spouting this line. Little wonder then that Kaur's business has gone from selling laddoo yellow and kaleji-coloured salwar suits and co-ord sets to brand collaborations. "Now I have more brand collabs than I can handle. There are back-to-back events, parties and functions where they say 'wow wale aaye hai' and call me on stage to smile and say the line. I can't go anywhere without being clicked," says Kaur.

But she isn't tired of saying it. "In fact, I feel happy and more energised to work every time I say it," says Kaur whose 18-year-old business has suddenly seen a 40% spike in sales, with most customers flying in from Mumbai. "Deepikaji (Padukone) made me famous. People take a flight to shop here for more 'chataak' (shiny) gota patti suits." She also worked with a noodle brand to promote their 'wow masala' range.

Kaur is waiting for her daughter Gurmehar to finish her fashion design course so that she can expand her shop. Her husband Inderjeet Singh mans the front desk, and keeps count of every like and share on her Instagram page which has over a million followers. "When we got a new car and posted a reel with a Diljit Dosanjh song, he 'liked' the post. Designer Manish Malhotra has liked our post. Madhuri Dixit has more than 30 million followers, but she only follows 101 people. One of them is Jasmeen," he says with pride.

Kaur says she wants to work harder and get more fame. "This is my New Year's resolution: to project woman power: I would request in-laws everywhere to let women work. Ghar baithe baithe 'dump' nahin hona chahiye (You shouldn't stay put in the house)."

Reporting by Sneha Bhura

ZIYA, 21 & ZAHAD, 23 AKA INDIA'S FIRST TRANS PARENTS

A pregnant trans man in the embrace of his partner, a trans woman. Among the images that broke the internet in 2023 was this photo of Ziya and Zahad from Kozhikode, Kerala, who became arguably the first transgender parents in the country this year. Zabiya Zahad, the nearly one-year-old baby of the couple, has now started



ed babbling and she calls Zahad Abba and Ziya Amma. Ziya says that this was all they wanted, to become a regular family.

"She is starting to talk. If she sees me, she calls me Amma and comes to me. She has learnt one or two words now. Otherwise, she speaks her own language," says a proud Ziya.

The couple has recently moved the high court so that the birth certificate may show them both as 'parents' without specifically

naming either one as father or mother.

"Our case for a parenting certificate is pending. The authorities have told us that they can make an exception for us and give us a certificate naming me as mother and Zahad as father. But we wanted to set a legal precedent so that it would become easier for trans parents like us in the future," says Ziya.

Ziya says that the viral fame made them soft targets of transphobia on social media. "Transphobic groups created an issue during a Pride event held in Malappuram questioning how a man would deliver a child. They even used our pictures and we had to file a police complaint. Action was taken against them," Ziya says.

Some YouTube channels too used their images in a bad light to get more reach. Ziya adds that they mostly ignore such people. "We focus on our family. I am busy with my career as a dance teacher and spending time with the baby. Also, we are thinking of going abroad. The trolls don't have anything better to do," Ziya says.

She says that they are happy now as they finally got the life they wanted. "We wanted to be a regular family and be seen like any other family in society. When Vava (baby) came, that wish came true," says Ziya.

She points out that transgender parents are not very unusual in the West. "Misconceptions that a baby being raised by trans parents would become a transgender person is absurd. She will be able to decide when she comes of age. Society shouldn't make such judgements about her gender identity," she says.

Reporting by Disney Tom

Seema, 30 & Sachin, 22 AKA THE PAK PUBG GIRL

It has been nearly eight months since Pakistan resident Seema Haider left family, home and country for love. Seema and her PUBG player turned real life husband Sachin Meena have been hit by a flurry of police and court cases but she says she has no regrets.

A resident of Khairpur district in Pakistan's Sindh province, Seema met Sachin online while playing PUBG in 2019. Sparks flew and the chats soon turned to long conversations. Seema, who was already married with four children, had been deserted by her husband. A new life with Sachin beckoned and she travelled to Nepal to tie the knot in March. She made it to India in May, and the couple stayed for a short time in Rabupura, Greater Noida. Soon, however, whispers that a Pakistani woman was living in the neighbourhood spread and police launched a search. The couple fled to Ballabgarh but were arrested on July 4. They were granted bail on July 7 by a Jewar court.

In the last few months, Seema has been forced to restrict her movement pending the cases. She has kept herself busy on social media garnering a following of 1.8 lakh with her reels, picked up some Hindi words and can churn out a mean palak saag. "Since the matter is sub judice, I have been advised by cops not to leave the house. So usually I stay at home while the children go out with Sachin for shopping and sightseeing," she says. Her hope is that the kids — Raj, Priyanka, Pari and Munni — can attend school soon. Till then she has become a minor celebrity in the neighbourhood, with people vying for selfies with her.

Reporting by Shafaque Alam

TOP 10 BESTSELLERS OF 2023 JAN-NOV

- 1 Atomic Habits - James Clear
- 2 The Psychology of Money - Morgan Housel
- 3 Energize your mind: Learn the Art of Mastering your Thoughts - Gaur Gopal Das
- 4 Ikigai: The Japanese Secret to a Long and Happy Life - Héctor García & Francesc Miralles
- 5 My First Library: Boxset of 10 Board Books for Kids
- 6 Grandma's Bag Of Stories - Sudha Murty
- 7 The Power of Your Subconscious Mind - Joseph Murphy
- 8 Brain Activity Book for Kids
- 9 Rich Dad Poor Dad - Robert T. Kiyosaki & Sharon Lichter
- 10 You Can - George Adams

Copyright data: Nielsen India BookScan Retail Panel Market

Jhumpa Lahiri PULITZER WINNER

This year I admired an incredible novel about a young girl growing up called 'Lies and Sorcery' by Italian writer Elsa Morante, which has been translated by Jenny McPhee. It's a hefty novel about the dynamics of women's lives in Italy. It also sets such a high bar to talk about what it means to be a mother and a daughter.



Sobhita Dhulipala ACTRESS

I'd like to recommend not one, but two books quite different from each other. The first one is 'Greenlights' by American actor Matthew McConaughey, which is part-memoir, and contains his learnings on successes and failures, joys and sorrows. The other is titled 'The Courage To Be Disliked' by Ichiro Kishimi and Fumitake Koga, a book that was originally written in Japanese and is a conversation between a philosopher and his student on how to be the person you truly want to be. I'd recommend these two books for the surprise they bring, for their easy narratives and their entertaining way of leading the reader into deep thought.



Manish Sabharwal VICE-CHAIRMAN OF TEAMLEASE SERVICES

The one book I would like to recommend is 'The Wizard and the Prophet' by Charles Mann. It chronicles the very different world views of two scientists — William Vogt and Norman Borlaug — on human progress in the 1950s. Vogt (the prophet)



believed that the only way to save the planet was to consume less. Borlaug (the wizard) believed that science and technology will solve our challenges. I loved the book because these two worldviews continue to confront each other in today's discussion around water, energy, and climate. As with most things, our answers probably lie somewhere in between.

Harish Bhat

BRAND CUSTODIAN AT TATA SONS



A book I totally enjoyed reading this year is 'The Penguin Book of Modern Tibetan Essays' edited by Tenzin Dickie. In the pages of this anthology, I discovered love and loss, strangers and friends, food and song — and across all these diverse themes the intense longing that the authors have for their beautiful homeland,

Tibet. These are personal narratives that give us a rare glimpse of modern Tibetan life with all its wondrous dreams and enchanting stories. Not only does this book evoke Tibet, it also brings us superbly written essays that are a delight to read and reflect upon. These reflections have left behind many new truths in my mind because, as Dickie says, the essay is an act of truth which changes not just the writer but the reader. If you are looking for a book that calms you down, yet gently stirs your mind, I would strongly recommend this book of Tibetan essays.

4.59L

The number of passengers that domestic airlines carried on Nov 20, notching up a record high

5-0

Ruling against same-sex marriage in the Supreme Court in October

\$4TN

India's stock market hit this market cap milestone on November 29



175

People have died in the ongoing Manipur violence

₹61.8CR

Price at which an Amrita Sher-Gil work sold in September, setting a world record for the highest price achieved by an Indian artist

30CR

Audience of ICC Men's Cricket World Cup final between India and Australia, making it the most-watched cricket match on television

555K

No of followers Bollywood diva Zeenat Aman has amassed since her Insta debut this year

₹1,000 CR+

Global box office collection of 'Pataa' and 'Jawan', making them only the 5th and 6th Indian films to cross that benchmark. The others are 'Dangal', 'Baahubali 2: The Conclusion', 'RRR' and 'KGF Chapter 2'

MY BEST READ OF 2023

Raghuram Rajan

ECONOMIST AND FORMER RBI GOVERNOR



As I was considering the various books I enjoyed during 2023, I thought of 'Chip War' by Chris Miller, which described how complicated and sophisticated chip fabrication has become, and 'Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow' by Gabrielle Zevin, a very readable novel about game development and love, which my daughter recommended. But I settled on 'Forks in the Road' by Dr C Rangarajan. This is part autobiography, part economic history, describing the rationale behind Indian economic policy during the tumultuous times he was in office, and part musings of a semi-outsider on government and how it works. For anyone interested in economic policy, this is a must-read.

Gautam Bhatia

LAWYER AND SCIENCE FICTION AUTHOR



I have been reading Palestinian literature for many years. I think it's important to read more Palestinian writers at this point given what's happening in the world. The book I would like to recommend is 'Enter Ghost' by Isabella Hammad who is a Palestinian-British novelist. 'Enter Ghost' is about the attempt of a group of Palestinian theatre actors to perform Shakespeare's Hamlet in the West Bank. The protagonist is a Palestinian who left the West Bank as a student and has been living in England after that. She was a rising star in the British theatre world until she had a bad breakup with one powerful doyen of the theatre world and has been in a slump since then. She sort of comes back to Palestine to just be back in touch with her roots and gets drawn into this performance of Hamlet in the West Bank. It's really a very moving story about the way that you still can do art under conditions of great oppression, and very constrained circumstances where you would think that art would be the last thing on people's minds. Apart from exploring the dynamics of personal relationships, exile and homecoming, the book is also a testament to the importance of art in our lives.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

60 - 70%

of IPO applications now come through UPI, which does around 340m transactions a day. It is expected to cross Mastercard soon

17

No of days workers were trapped in an Uttarakhand tunnel

2,68,923

No of Indian students who went abroad in 2022/23, an increase of 35% year on year

9

No of relocated cheetahs that have died at Kuno

1,191

This is how long WHO's public health emergency for Covid-19 lasted. It ended on May 5, 2023

765

Runs scored by Virat Kohli in the 2023 World Cup. This is the highest number of runs for a tournament and bettered the previous record of 673 runs set by Sachin Tendulkar in 2002-03

1,425,775,850

India's population touched this number in April, matching China and then surpassing it as the world's most populated country



Playing through the pain barrier, Neeraj Chopra completed the task of ticking all the boxes in the winner's checklist this year. But it is his performance in the 2024 Paris Olympics that will determine where the amiable champ stands in the pantheon of Indian greats...

A CHAMPION, AND A FRIEND

Moushumi.Bora@timesgroup.com

It's VK... it's ST... no it's NC. LOL, we are just discussing who's the GOAT in the modern Indian playground.

Virat Kohli and Sachin Tendulkar may get the nod for obvious reasons, including Neeraj Chopra's vote, but the way the story can unfold in the coming year may just change the trajectory of the argument. All roads lead to Paris for the Olympics, and all thoughts gear up to that golden question: "Will he, won't he?"

It has been a fine year for Neeraj as he completed the task of ticking all the boxes in the champion athlete's checklist. Olympics, World Athletics Championships, Asian Games, Commonwealth Games, Diamond League Final, Asian Championships – been there, done that.

The 'finish line' is near for the young thoroughbred, who turned 26 on Christmas Eve. All the preparation, discipline, toil and sweat come down to one night and he knows very well that today's adulation will turn into an illusion if tomorrow's target is missed.

"They say a lion always takes a step back before attacking. I like that," is a display of his resilience on the Olympics website, in a huge font size designed to drive across the thought with dramatic effect. And you often seen him gather these failures in a bundle, only to take that inspiration for the extra step.

You hear his guttural roar, see his clenched fists when he executes that desired throw, share the feeling down deep when the javelin leaves his grip, live on the edge as he falls to rise. But the most important thing is that he has a grasp on life, and a hand on the heart. He is the people's champion, a friend in need, a symbol of peace in a di-

vided world. Not shy or scared of voicing his opinion on the wrestlers' dilemma, he talked of the hurt "to see our athletes on the streets demanding justice".

Neeraj had also brought to the MEA's notice when there were "issues with Kishore Jena's visa, preventing him from entering Hungary for the World Championships". And who can forget the World champion calling silver-winning Pakistan rival Arshad Nadeem to join him for the photoshoot on the Budapest track?

In the Tokyo Games, Nadeem was seen with Neeraj's javelin before the Indian's first throw in the final leading to accusations of 'tampering' on social media. Chopra was taken aback by 'the hurtful comments'.

"Sports is something that teaches us to walk together, and all javelin throwers share mutual respect and love," he professed, thus piercing through the tentacles of political agenda.

"India versus Pakistan always makes good headlines, but in global events we have to focus on every competitor," Neeraj said after clinching the World Championships gold. There will be many striving to cross barriers, and it takes only one bad day, a nervous itch or minimal distraction to bring years of prep tumbling down.

All games require different strategies, science, planning, diet, recovery etc. Throwing a javelin is like a symphony if you watch in slow motion but in real time, it's all about milliseconds, variety of minute movements, the tension of the body at the point of release, the



CHOSEN ONE: Neeraj Chopra conquered the field and the hearts this year

Action Replay

NEERAJ CHOPRA IN 2023

	Result (In metres)	Place	Stage	Competition
05-05-2023	88.67	1	F	Diamond League, Doha
30-06-2023	87.66	1	F	Diamond League, Lausanne
25-08-2023	88.77	1	Q	World Athletics, Budapest
27-08-2023	88.17	1	F	World Athletics, Budapest
31-08-2023	85.71	2	F	Diamond League, Zurich
16-09-2023	83.8	2	F	Diamond League Final, Eugene
04-10-2023	88.88	1	F	Asian Games, Hangzhou

transfer of the feeling to the inanimate object... you get the drift. Mozart's not playing, it's heavy metal.

Then, there's the constant tweaking. "It's a bit like a Formula 1 car, you can always make small changes here and there and you can always find some small mistakes," said Neeraj's German rival Johannes Vetter.

He also stated that "90m is the new normal", breaching it several times, but failing in Tokyo. Technical issues, conditions, fatigue, whatever the reason. It's all about timing it right. Neeraj's coach, German biomechanics expert Klaus Bartonietz, put India's golden night in 2021 down to his ward's mental freshness.

This year, Neeraj peaked at the

right moments as his team managed his schedule conservatively because of a nagging muscle strain. Pain is part of an athlete's daily life, pushing through it a champion's ethos. Before the World Championships, he admitted he could not "even throw with a full run-up" but it was his "positive mindset" that spurred him on. And we all know the rest of the story.

What separates contenders from pretenders is mental toughness. Rewind to October and we recall the chaos surrounding Neeraj's first throw at the Asian Games. It was at a gold-winning distance but not recorded because of so-called technical issues, and the conspiracy theories started brewing at the Hangzhou Olympic Stadium.

If it was designed to throw him off, it was a futile effort. With the presence of Kishore Jena, who had his own drama with the officials, Chopra rebooted and registered 88.88m with his fourth effort to claim gold. For India, it was a one-two finish with Jena claiming silver. "He pushed me to perform in my moment of doubt," said Neeraj, appreciating his partner on the podium. "Mujhe pata tha bhai saab maar hi denge (I knew big brother would surpass me)," Jena quipped.

The 90m-mark continues to elude Neeraj, though. For someone who was inspired by watching Czech Jan Zelezny on YouTube – he of the 98.48m record – it was not meant to be this year because of his obvious discomfort and injury

management. "I would keep working hard to improve my distance but I can do it only if I stay injury-free," he spoke of his limitations.

As Neeraj blew the candles on his birthday cake the night before Christmas, he must have made a wish for the New Year. Good health, for sure. Born with a sweet tooth, he must have indulged in a sizeable piece. But when the bells ring for 2024, the hunger will be different. The hunger will be for Olympic gold, again. "I don't think I have achieved everything. I will work harder; push myself harder to win more medals and bring more laurels for my country," he had promised.

Dreams do come true with self-belief and hard work, and NC's no slacker. He could well be the GOAT.

JAVELIN'S GOLDEN BOY

Tokyo Olympics	2021
World Championships	2023
Asian Games	2023
Asian Games	2018
Diamond League Final	2022
Commonwealth Games	2018
Asian Athletics Championships	2017
World U20 Championships	2016
South Asian Games	2016

65 THERE IS A SAYING THAT THROWERS HAVE NO FINISH LINE. THE BEST THING IS THAT WE HAVE OUR JAVELIN. WE CAN ALWAYS PUSH OURSELVES. I MAY HAVE WON A LOT OF MEDALS, BUT THE MOTIVATION IS TO THROW FARTHER AND FARTHER. BY WINNING THESE MEDALS, I SHOULD NOT THINK THAT I HAVE ACHIEVED EVERYTHING. I WILL WORK HARDER, PUSH MYSELF HARDER TO BRING MORE LAURELS FOR MY COUNTRY."

66 I WAS FEELING VERY GOOD THIS YEAR AND THOUGHT I WOULD THROW 90M. BUT IN BETWEEN, THE GROIN INJURY CREATED A PROBLEM. I HAD THREE 89M THROWS LAST YEAR. IT WILL COME SOMEDAY BUT DON'T KNOW WHEN. I WON'T TAKE PRESSURE THINKING FOR THAT. WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT IS THE MEDAL. I GIVE MORE IMPORTANCE TO CONSISTENCY, THAT GIVES CONFIDENCE IN BIG EVENTS. WHEN I REACH 90M, I WILL ALSO TRY TO KEEP IT CONSISTENT. I HAVE BEEN WORKING HARD AND WAITING FOR WHEN IT WILL COME."

—Neeraj Chopra



ALL TOGETHER NOW: Neeraj shares the spotlight with Pakistan's Arshad Nadeem (top) at the Worlds in Budapest (Aug); Celebrates with Kishore Jena and the relay team at the Hangzhou Asian Games (Oct)

Guidelines to ensure judicious ICU use, says expert on panel

► Continued from P 1

Dr RK Mani, one of the experts involved in development of the guidelines, said ICU is a limited resource. "Our recommendations are aimed to ensure judicious use so those who need it most get it on priority."

Dr Sumit Ray, Secretary of Indian College of Critical Care Medicine, said these are not binding and meant for only guidance. "The ICU admission and discharge criteria are broad in nature and a lot is left to the wisdom of the treating doctor," he added. Dr Ray said most developed nations have protocol in place for triaging of patients so that the resources are utilised judiciously.

India has close to 1 lakh ICU beds, mostly in private facilities and located in big cities. "Poor people who cannot afford private hospitals have to struggle, sometimes without success, to get an ICU bed," said advocate and public health activist Ashok Agarwal. "The idea of prioritising patients for ICU care based on their condition may be good for a disaster situation but in general, the government should work towards ensuring enough facilities to provide critical care to all," he added.

Cost of an ICU bed in private facilities is 5-10 times that of a general bed. There have been complaints in past about needless admission to ICUs.

Experts say the new guidelines that have already been put in public domain by the Directorate General of Health Services, the apex technical advisory and regulatory body of healthcare under the health ministry, may help adjudicate better whether ICU admission was a requirement in certain cases. The guidelines suggest that a patient should be discharged from ICU, if her/his physiological aberrations return to near normal or baseline status or if there is reasonable resolution and stability of the acute illness that necessitated ICU admission.

2-month-old 'bubble baby' gets bone marrow transplant

One Of The Youngest To Receive Stem Cells From A Volunteer

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Mumbai: A two-month-old girl with bubble baby syndrome has become one of the youngest patients in the country to undergo a bone marrow transplant (BMT) from an unrelated donor.

The child, Anisha Bhandekar, was brought from Karwar, Karnataka, to Parel's Wadia Hospital when she was 19 days old and underwent BMT within the next two months.

'Bubble babies', who suffer from severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID), are born without an immune system that makes every slight infection a life-threatening one.

"In a short while, we managed to get several stem cell matches from donor registries and could carry out a

ONLY 1 IN 60K AFFECTED BY DISEASE

► Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID) is a rare, genetic disorder, affecting 1 in 60,000 babies

► It is often called 'bubble baby disease', as the child has to stay in a sterile environment or 'bubble'

► Children with SCID don't have an immune system

to defend the body from bacteria, viruses, parasites, fungi

► Child with SCID is treated with a stem cell transplant, also known as bone marrow transplant

► With new bone marrow, the child's body can build a whole new, functional immune system



BMT to help Anisha recover," said Dr Prashant Hiwarkar, who heads the BMT department at Wadia Hospital. He said bubble babies rarely get the diagnosis in time. "They usually come at a very late stage, but in Anisha's case, timely advice from doctors in Karwar and Mangalore helped," he said.

Anisha's parents had a child who succumbed at 11 months of age after suffering several bouts of infection. "After her death, doctors told us that if we have another child, we should immediately conduct a few tests," said Geetesh Bhandekar, a civic contractor from Karwar. The tests revealed

she had SCID, prompting the doctors to refer her to Wadia Hospital.

Anisha, who underwent BMT on November 9, was discharged from hospital four days ago, but the family will stay in Mumbai for another six months. Wadia Hospital CEO Dr Minnie Bodhanwala said, "This is one of the youngest transplant patients in the country to receive stem cells from a volunteer donor. Her case underlines the importance of early diagnosis and the collaborative efforts of medical professionals and bone marrow donor registries."

Haematologist Dr Mukesh Desai from Nanavati Hospital, Vile Parle, said, "Many BMT centres have come up across India in the recent years, but more needs to be done."

Scribe's tweets on Dera chief draw HC ire

New Delhi: The Delhi high court expressed Saturday its displeasure over tweets by YouTuber and journalist Shyam Meera Singh about Dera Sacha Sauda chief Ram Rahim Singh while a case between them was being heard. Singh's lawyers eventually assured the court that he would delete the tweets, posted on Friday.

The HC is hearing a plea by Ram Rahim to take down a video by Singh which alleges the Dera chief "fooled" followers. Ram Rahim has sought orders to have the video deleted. "If he (Singh) is a journalist, he needs to be responsible. Please don't make any tweets which interfere with the justice delivery system," a single bench of Justice Manoj Jain observed, adding there should be no further tweets while the case is on.

If Assam CM asks us to wait for a yr, we will: Baruah

► Continued from P 1

Paresh Baruah said Ulfa (I) wanted an assurance that the issue of sovereignty, which he said is Assam's historical political right, will be discussed.

"We have told the Assam chief minister Himanta Biswa Sarma clearly that we cannot go to the discussion table without the assurance that sovereignty will be discussed. The only thing the CM probably needs is the support and right guidance from Assam's intellectuals," Baruah said.



True democracy will be reflected if the Constitution allows discussion on every issue. One nation, one rule alone will not serve the purpose unless we discuss all issues, said Ulfa (I) chief Baruah

He said discussions on sovereignty wouldn't violate the Indian Constitution, highlighting the importance of addressing all issues in a democracy.

"The Indian Constitution does not bar discussions on sovereignty. Discussion on sovereignty will not destroy the sanctity of the Indian Constitution. Rather, it will add more shine to the Constitution. True democracy will be reflected if the Constitution allows discussion on every issue. One nation, one rule alone will not serve the purpose unless you

discuss all issues," he said.

Chief minister Sarma mentioned Friday that the deal with Ulfa would facilitate efforts to involve Ulfa (I) in the peace process.

"There were suggestions in the state that talks cannot be held with both factions together and so now we can make our efforts to get Paresh Baruah to the discussion table," the CM had said.

Baruah acknowledged the possibility and expressed hope in Sarma's role. "We believe he can do it and that is why we call him a catalyst. We have not lost hope and even if the Assam chief minister asks us to wait for one more year, we would have no objections. We have waited for 44 years, and we have endless patience," the Ulfa (I) leader said.

While being critical of Friday's peace deal, Baruah extended good wishes to Ulfa cadres, emphasising their newfound freedom after decades in designated camps. "How can we go (for talks)? No one has given us that assurance yet (on discussing sovereignty). We do not want to sit for dialogue for a financial package," he said, describing the peace pact with Ulfa as "less descriptive and more ruminative".

However, Baruah made it clear that he was not surprised, angry, frustrated, or disappointed with the peace deal. "We knew this outcome 13 years ago. No one goes for discussions to sign a pact that has been arranged," he said.

He said the agreement lacks specificity as it doesn't provide a detailed description of what has been granted and the mechanisms for implementation. "This accord is more ruminative because it took 14 years. Does it take so long for this when all the things included in the accord were finalised in the last six months?"

Delhi cops quiz Navlakha in Mum for 3 hrs in NewsClick case

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: A special investigation team (SIT) of Delhi Police questioned activist Gautam Navlakha in Mumbai for over three hours on Saturday in connection with their investigation into the UAPA case against web portal NewsClick.

Also accused in the Bhima Koregaon-Elgar Parishad Maoist link case, Navlakha has been under house arrest in Mumbai. On December 11, a court had granted Delhi Police permission to interrogate Navlakha, who is named as an accused in the FIR against NewsClick and its editor/founders.

Navlakha, sources said, was evasive on many of the questions. The SIT had prepared over 60 questions pertaining to alleged funding from China and suspected links with many entities including Syed Ghulam Nabi Fai, who was arrested by the FBI in the US.

The UAPA FIR against NewsClick names Shanghai-based businessman Neville Roy Singham and Navlakha as accused along with Purkayastha

Navlakha was asked about the nature of his association with the portal and its arrested editor Prabir Purkayastha. The questioning began around 1pm. A team led by an ACP-rank officer from Delhi police's special cell flew to Mumbai this morning.

The UAPA FIR against NewsClick names Shanghai-based businessman Neville Roy Singham and Navlakha as accused along with Purkayastha. Terming Singham — of Sri Lankan-Cuban descent — an active member of the propaganda department of Communist Party of China, Delhi Police claim he infused credence to disrupt India's sovereignty and territorial integrity with plans to foment disaffection.

NOVAK DJOKOVIC RELISHING BEING BACK
IN HIS 'HAPPY PLACE' AUSTRALIAARSENAL MUST DO BETTER IN BOTH
BOXES TO WIN EPL, SAYS ARTETA

Heartbreak for hosts as Oz prevail

Richa's 96, Deepti's Fifer Not Enough
As India Women Lose 2nd ODI By 3
Runs In Another Series Loss At HomeGaurav Gupta
@timesgroup.com

Mumbai: India fought hard but went down by three runs in a thrilling second women's ODI against Australia at the Wankhede Stadium on Saturday night. Keeping their nerves at the crunch, the Aussies, who now have an unassailable 2-0 lead, have maintained their record of not having lost an ODI series in India.

India were propelled by Richa Ghosh's career-best 96 off 117 balls and off-spinning all-rounder Deepti Sharma's 5/38, but were left to rue their shoddy fielding, which saw them drop as many as seven catches. There was also some really slow batting towards the end by Deepti, who consumed 36 balls for her 24 not out while managing only one four.

Hurt badly by cramps but perhaps finding her energy from the 3,000-odd enthusiastic spectators, Ghosh valiantly kept producing the boundaries, but all Deepti contributed was eight runs in a 47-run partnership for the fifth wicket as the asking rate kept creeping up as India chased 259.

Eventually, Ghosh, much to her frustration, was caught by Phoebe Litchfield at cover off pacer Annabel Sutherland, who then took the wickets of Pooja Vastrakar (8) and Amanjot Kaur (4) to finish with 3-47 in 9 overs and the 'Player of the Match' award.

India needed 16 in the final two overs but a superb penultimate over by off-spinner Ashleigh Gardner, which went for just three runs, pegged the hosts back. While they took Sutherland for two fours in the final over, India eventually missed out by a whisker.

Even as they too dropped four catches, Australia did pull off a brilliant one which made a huge difference in the close

game, as Litchfield pulled off a blinder at cover to end the well-set Jemimah Rodrigues' (44; 55b, 3x4) stay at the wicket in the 34th over.

Joining forces at 71/2 in the 16th over, Ghosh, who was dropped on 0 (by Litchfield at first slip) and 36 (at long-off by Sutherland) and Rodrigues had added 88 in 108 balls for the third wicket to put India on course to chase down 259. Promoted to the No. 3 spot, Ghosh justified the team management's faith in her batting abilities, though she will be disappointed not to have taken India over the line.

Earlier, Deepti returned the best-ever figures ever by an Indian women's team bowler against Australia, but India's unbelievably mediocre fielding let them down badly, allowing the Aussies to make 258/8 after they elected to bat.

Deepti, introduced in the 22nd over, broke the 77-run second wicket partnership in 88 balls between Elysse Perry (50, 47b, 5x4, 1x6) and Litchfield (63, 98b, 6x4) to bring India back into the game. It was a lucky break for India as Perry pulled a short ball straight to debutant Shreyanka Patil at short mid-wicket.

Capitalizing on a dry wicket that offered her turn, Deepti then had Beth Moon-ey leg-before and the in-form Tahlia McGrath castled with one that was too close for the late cut.

Sneh subbed after collision

In a blow for India, off-spinning all-rounder Sneh Rana had to be replaced by concussion substitute Harleen Deol after complaining of headache following a nasty collision with Vastrakar.

Brief scores: Australia 258/8 (Litchfield 63, Perry 50, Deepti 5-38) beat India 255/8 (Ghosh 96, Sutherland 3-47, Wareham 2-39) by three runs



LONE WARRIOR! Richa Ghosh cuts a lonely figure as Australia celebrate an Indian wicket on Saturday

Shardul Thakur gets hit on shoulder in nets

Centurion: The Indian team on Saturday had an injury scare after seam bowling allrounder Shardul Thakur suffered a blow on his shoulder at nets while batting.

There is the possibility of him missing the second Test in Cape Town beginning on January 3, but the extent of the hit could be ascertained through scanning if required.

At this moment, it couldn't be confirmed if his injury warrants scans.

But Thakur was in considerable discomfort and couldn't bowl during the net session.

Thakur, who was the first player to enter the throwdown nets, was hit on the left shoulder while facing throwdowns from fielding coach T. Dilip.

It happened around 15 minutes into the net session when Rathour delivered a throwdown that kicked up from length.



It had Thakur in a tangle like it happened in the second innings of the first Test when

pacer Kagiso Rabada generated an edge for David Bedingham to complete a catch.

Here too, Thakur couldn't fend the short ball that hit his leading shoulder (left) and he immediately shrieked in pain.

But the Mumbai all-rounder continued batting in the nets.

Once he finished batting, the physio put an ice pack sling around his shoulder and he didn't take any further part in the nets.

This might be a simple bruise but it will be interesting to see how quickly the injury subsides.

Thakur was a big disappointment in the first Test having given away over 100 runs in just 19 overs and was below par with the bat as well.

Coetzee ruled out of 2nd Test

South African pacer Gerald Coetzee has been ruled out of the second Test against India starting

January 3 in Cape Town after suffering from pelvic inflammation.

The 23-year-old developed the inflammation during the opening Test here and the discomfort only worsened as he gradually bowled further in the match which ended within three days.

"Fast bowler Gerald Coetzee will miss the second Betway Test against India after developing pelvic inflammation during the first Test at SuperSport Park," Cricket South Africa wrote on 'X'.

Coetzee could bowl only five overs during the second innings, giving away 28 runs before his side dismantled India by an innings and 32 runs. He finished with figures of one for 74 during the first innings.

The pacer had gone for scans on Friday, which showed the extent of the injury. **PTI**

My Test achievement special after missing few years in younger days, says Cummins

Melbourne: Captain Pat Cummins declared himself delighted at the end of a landmark year for Australian cricket as his 10-wicket haul in the second test win over Pakistan in Melbourne secured his entry into an elite band of bowlers.

Cummins led his side on Friday to a fourth consecutive home series win with a Man of the Match performance that saw him become only the 10th player to claim 250 wickets or more for Australia. The 30-year-old joins an illustrious list, headed by Shane Warne, and featuring fast bowlers Glenn McGrath and Dennis Lillee as well as current test players Nathan Lyon and Mitch Starc.

"It's pretty special company being up there," said Cummins, who now has 252 wickets in 57 Test matches. "A real proud moment to see the names you're up there alongside. Achievements in Test cricket, the things that are most satisfying, is the longevity it takes to hit a few of those milestones, especially after missing a few years when I was a bit younger. It's always a nice little reminder."

Cummins' career haul is particularly noteworthy for a player who started his Test career aged 18, but spent more than five years out of the team due to a succession of injuries.

He returned in 2017 and was appointed captain in November 2021, with questions initially raised over how effective a fast bowler could be in the role. Cummins has answered those questions emphatically, leading Australia to the World Test Championship, a 50-overs World Cup triumph and the retention of the Ashes in England during the last 12 months.

His 10-wicket haul in the second Test was the second of his career as he took 5/49 in the second innings to finish the match with 10/97 and snuff out Pakistan's hopes of levelling the three-match series. "I'm really happy for a few reasons. Personally, the main reason is that's the best I felt bowling for a little while," Cummins said.

"My rhythm felt really good. I felt like I bowled with good pace, I knew where my wrist was and could control the seam, some good bouncers. I felt really happy with just how I was bowling if I didn't take wickets. And then as a team, just a huge year, all formats, a lot of success, and stop off by winning a series at home which we pride ourselves on doing. It's a pretty satisfying way to end 2023." **REUTERS**



CUMMINS

GALLERY

PCB to take up Rizwan's disputed dismissal in Melbourne Test with ICC

Karachi: After the controversial dismissal of Mohammed Rizwan in the second Test against Australia, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has decided to take up issues pertaining to umpiring and use of technology with the International Cricket Council (ICC). On Friday, the on-field umpire refused to give Rizwan out after Australian captain and pacer Pat Cummins appealed for a caught behind, but the home side managed to overturn the decision through the DRS.

Hasaranga named Sri Lanka's T20 skipper, Mendis to lead ODI side: Sri Lanka appointed all-rounder Wanindu Hasaranga as the captain of their Twenty-20 side on Saturday ahead of their series against Zimbabwe next month, while batsman Kusal Mendis will lead their one-day international team.

Tricky draw awaits home shuttlers at India Open: Top Indian shuttlers, including HS Prannoy and Lakshya Sen, have been handed tricky draws at next month's India Open Super 750 badminton tournament as they gear up to exploit the home advantage with Paris Olympics qualification at stake.

Carlsen takes 7th Blitz title: Ian Nepomniachtchi had questioned FIDE for providing a personal lounge to Magnus Carlsen during the World Rapid and Blitz chess championships at Samarkand, Uzbekistan, dubbing it as unfair to others. The Russian also said "some animals are more equal than others". Carlsen duly obliged with a beast-like performance, winning both titles. Even though tired, he lost one of 34 games (13 rapid and 21 blitz). The Norwegian superstar had won his fifth World rapid crown on Thursday without losing a single game.

Wrestling Nationals in Jaipur from February 2-5, says WFI ad-hoc panel: The senior national championships for wrestling will be held from February 2 to 5 in Jaipur, the ad-hoc committee governing the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI) said on Saturday. Competitions will be held for top honours in senior free style, Greco Roman and the women's section, the Bhupinder Singh Bajwa-led committee said. It stated that "all correspondence should be done with ad-hoc panel" and no stakeholder should be in touch with the suspended WFI. **TNN & AGENCIES**

ACTION TODAY

BASKETBALL: NBA, 3.30 am to 8 am (Jio)
CRICKET: NZ vs BD, 3rd T20, 5 am (Prime)
FOOTBALL: EPL, Fulham vs Arsenal, Spurs vs Bournemouth, 7.30 pm (Star)

Stimac backs known faces for Asian Cup

Marcus Mergulhao
@timesgroup.com

Panaji: Igor Stimac will miss several key players for the Asian Cup 2023, but his 26-member squad has enough experience with nine players being part of the squad for the continental showpiece four years ago. All three goalkeepers - Amrinder Singh, Gurpreet Singh Sandhu and Vishal Kaithi - were part of the India squad for the Asian Cup in 2019 under Stephen Constantine. Captain Sunil Chhetri, defender Sandesh Jhinghan and midfielder Anirudh Thapa will play another big role in the starting 11, while Udanta Singh, Subhasish Bose and Pritam Kotal are the three other players with Asian Cup experience.

Stimac is handicapped with the absence of Anwar Ali, Ashique Kuruniyan and Jeakson Singh, all of whom are key players in the new national team set-up. Their physicality would have also helped in group-stage games against Australia, Uzbekistan and Syria. The national coach has selected a predictable squad, opting for players with experience and those he has seen in the past. Some of them have been low on form with their clubs in the ISL, but the national coach didn't want to take chances with new talent at a major tournament.

That explains why Stimac included Sahal Abdul Samad in the squad, despite the Mohun Bagan Super Giant midfielder picking up an injury four days ago. India play the opener against World Cuppers Australia on January 13.

Man City win, last-gasp Villa up to 2nd

Manchester: Douglas Luiz's late penalty took Aston Villa joint top of the Premier League with a 3-2 win over 10-man Burnley on Saturday as Manchester City closed on the leaders by sweeping aside Sheffield United 2-0. Luiz's spot-kick that crept in off the underside of the bar sent Unai Emery's men level on points with Liverpool at the top of the table. For Man City, despite missing Erling Haaland for a seventh consecutive game due to a foot injury, they were never troubled by the bottom-of-the-table Blades.

Palmer at the double as Chelsea sink battling Luton

Cole Palmer struck twice as Chelsea survived a late scare to banish their away-day blues with a 3-2 win against Premier League strugglers Luton on Saturday. Mauricio Pochettino's side were in complete control when Palmer scored his second goal to put the visitors three up with 20 minutes to play.

Palmer had opened the scoring at Kenilworth Road before Noni Madueke doubled Chelsea's lead late in the first half. But former Chelsea midfielder Ross Barkley netted to spark a spirited finish from third-bottom Luton, who scored again through Elijah Adebayo in a dramatic finale.



ON TARGET: Cole Palmer

Leaders Inter held to hard-fought 1-1 draw at Genoa

Serie A leaders Inter Milan were held to a 1-1 draw away to Genoa on Friday as Marko Arnautovic's first league goal for club was cancelled out by a header from Radu Dragusin. In another match, Napoli were held to a 0-0 draw at home to Monza.

Brazil pays tributes to Pelé one year after his death: Brazilians paid tributes to soccer legend Pelé on Friday, one year after his death at age 82. A ceremony at Christ the Redeemer featured a projection of Brazil shirt with his name and number 10 on the statue. **AGENCIES**

Beauty returns as Grace misses out

Arnab Seal
@timesgroup.com

Kolkata: Jharkhand's Beauty Dungdung has made a comeback to the senior women's team after she was included in the squad for the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers to be held in Ranchi from January 13-19.

The youngster was out of the squad for a long time following an injury which saw her miss the Asian Games, Asian

HOCKEY OLY QUALIFIERS

Champions Trophy (ACT) that was held in Ranchi as well as the Junior World Cup. However, she will now get a chance to play in her home state for the first time in her career along with Salima Tete, Sangita Kumari and Nikki Pradhan, who all were part of the ACT-winning team.

Apart from Beauty, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke has

also found a place in the 18-member squad. She was part of the reserves during ACT but did play after Sonika picked up an injury during the group stage.

The biggest shock however was the non-inclusion of senior defender Deep Grace Ekka. Not only will her experience in the backline be missed, but in her absence only Deepika will be the lone penalty corner specialist in the squad. It remains to be seen how well the team adapts to that. Besides Deep Grace, Baljeet Kaur has also failed to find a place in the team.

Squad: Goalkeepers: Savita, Bichu Devi Kharibam; **Defenders:** Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Monika; **Midfielders:** Nisha, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Neha, Navneet Kaur, Salima Tete, Sonika, Jyoti, Beauty Dungdung; **Forwards:** Lalremisami, Sangita Kumari, Deepika, Vandana Katariya.

Turkish Super Cup summit clash postponed

Istanbul: The Turkish Super Cup final between Galatasaray and Fenerbahce scheduled to be played in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh on Friday was postponed over what the clubs described as "some problems" in the event's organisation.

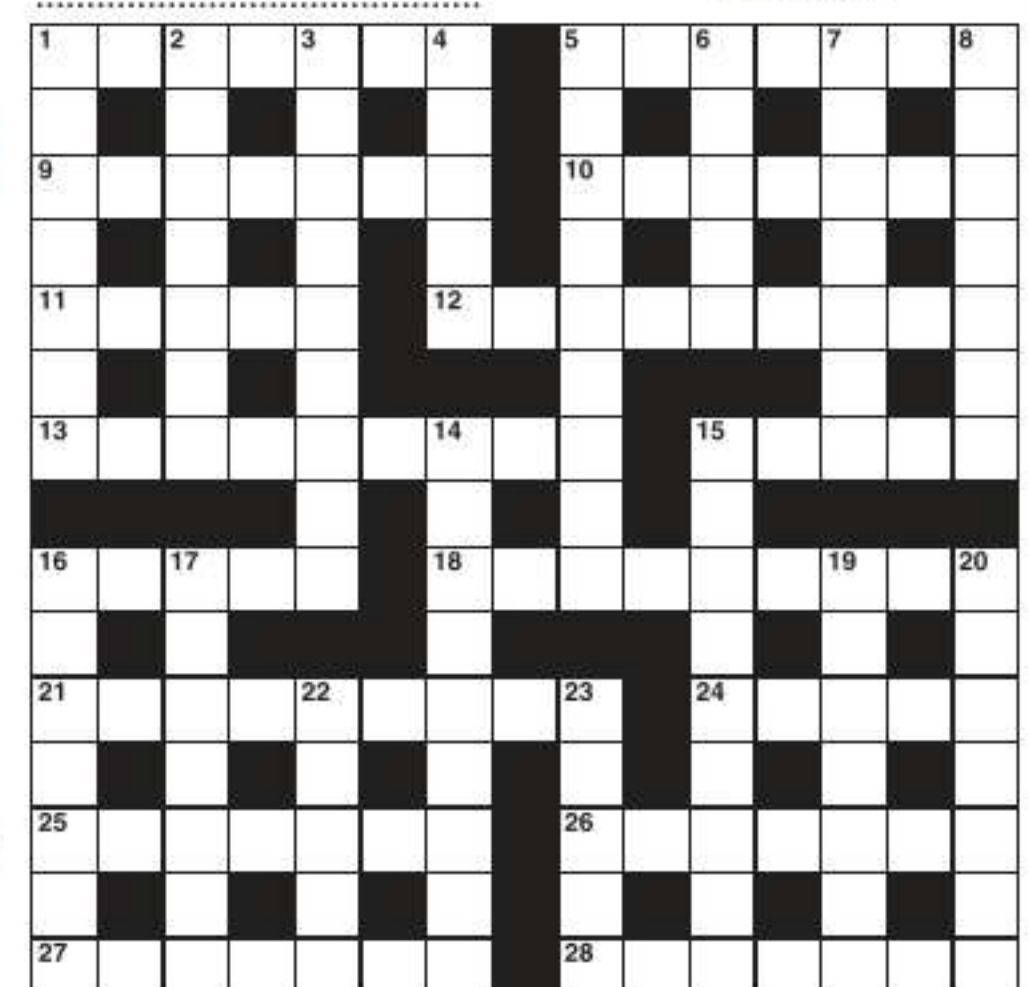
At the heart of those issues, according to media reports, was the wish of the two Istanbul teams to wear t-shirts featuring the founder of modern Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, during the warm-up ahead of the evening kick-off.

Turkish media said Saudi officials had rejected this demand, though it was not clear why, and that the clubs refused to play in the Super Cup final at the King Saud University venue, which is also known as Al-Awwal Park stadium, as a result. **REUTERS**

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TCC#0148

CRYPTIC CLUES

- Across**
- Two foods for a woodworker (7)
 - Broods about one's exploits (7)
 - Game lay around for use by the cook (7)
 - Local board of trade (3,4)
 - Farewell notice that is given to union leader (5)
 - Not a fellow to go around with (9)
 - A number lead the union in time-wasting action (9)
 - Remains of pitched battles (5)
 - The classic type of French novel (5)
 - Post office (9)
 - It involves places and composition (9)
 - Little in the way of pudding (5)
 - Vague idea linking differences (7)
 - He rises high in his profession (7)
 - They're just bundles of nerves (7)
 - Sphere of vision (7)

- Down**
- CAApple sauce (7)
 - Beginning a letter (7)
 - Until pool is improved there's contamination (9)
 - Tear out about ten more (5)
 - The means I contrived to control the sail (9)
 - Describing a boom in restored icons (5)
 - Various chaps in vegetable production (7)
 - Boy with nets and lines (7)
 - Lost again maybe and longing to get home (9)
 - Water for a mother pig (5,4)
 - Winding up very rich (7)
 - Little chap shows main trouble with relatives (7)
 - I earn it from a sort of selling (7)
 - Living in a wild state; not a flat (7)
 - Remaining calm (5)
 - Girl takes two keys to escape (5)

QUICK CLUES

- Across**
- Edible molluscs (7) 5 Country landlocked in South Africa (7) 9 Take a false step (7) 10 Unfamiliar (7)
 - Habitually lazy person (5) 12 Othello's wife (9)
 - Try earnestly (9) 15 Excessive hurry (5)
 - Author of The Three Musketeers (5) 18 Forgo (2,7)
 - Remote isolated place (9) 24 Proportion (5)
 - Initial (7) 26 Upper limit (7) 27 Gracefully slim (7)
 - A particular (7)

- Down**
- Exceptionally large (7) 2 Sordid (7) 3 Disconcert (9)
 - Velocity (5) 5 Ultimate breaking-point (4,5)
 - Bout of self-indulgence (5) 7 Of little substance (7)
 - Daunt (7) 14 Person of long experience (3,6)
 - Random (3-2-4) 16 Of questionable truth (7)
 - Broad heavy knife (7) 19 Abnormally large (7)
 - Consideration (7) 22 Uncanny (5)
 - Happen again (5)

SOLUTIONS TO LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

CRYPTIC

ALBERT NEGATIVE
DEER TUB A
MODELS CURTAINS
ISLE OF JAZZ
REPEATED ABRABE
A R D A I A R
LEES PRINCHHORN
E A A B V N V
BEDFROSES NETS
R T X R P R I
OUTSET ASSASSIN
W H R N E R I C
STREAKED TONGUE
E L L L U R
BUELLIST SETTLE

QUICK

CASTLE TALISMAN
P K A C W M A O
OPIATE CAMPAIGN
E N E C Y O N P
SOFT SPOT AS WELL
U L T E P T U
S P I N C M E T O P A S S
N S G N T S
GETUPANDGO WARP
O P E E U R L A
UNDULY SIDELONG
L E L Z N V W E
AMBROSIA GENEVA
S A B U A B N
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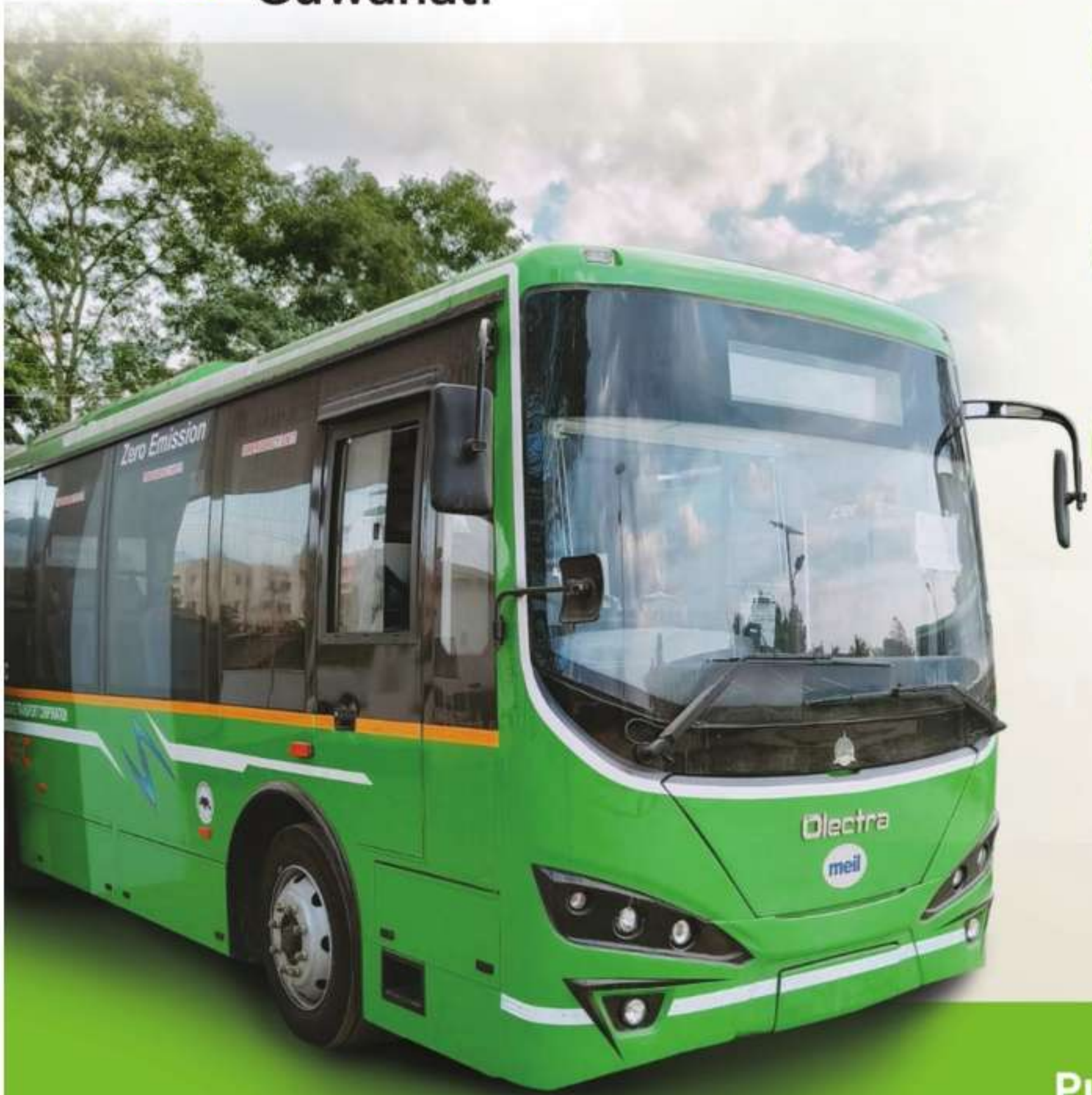
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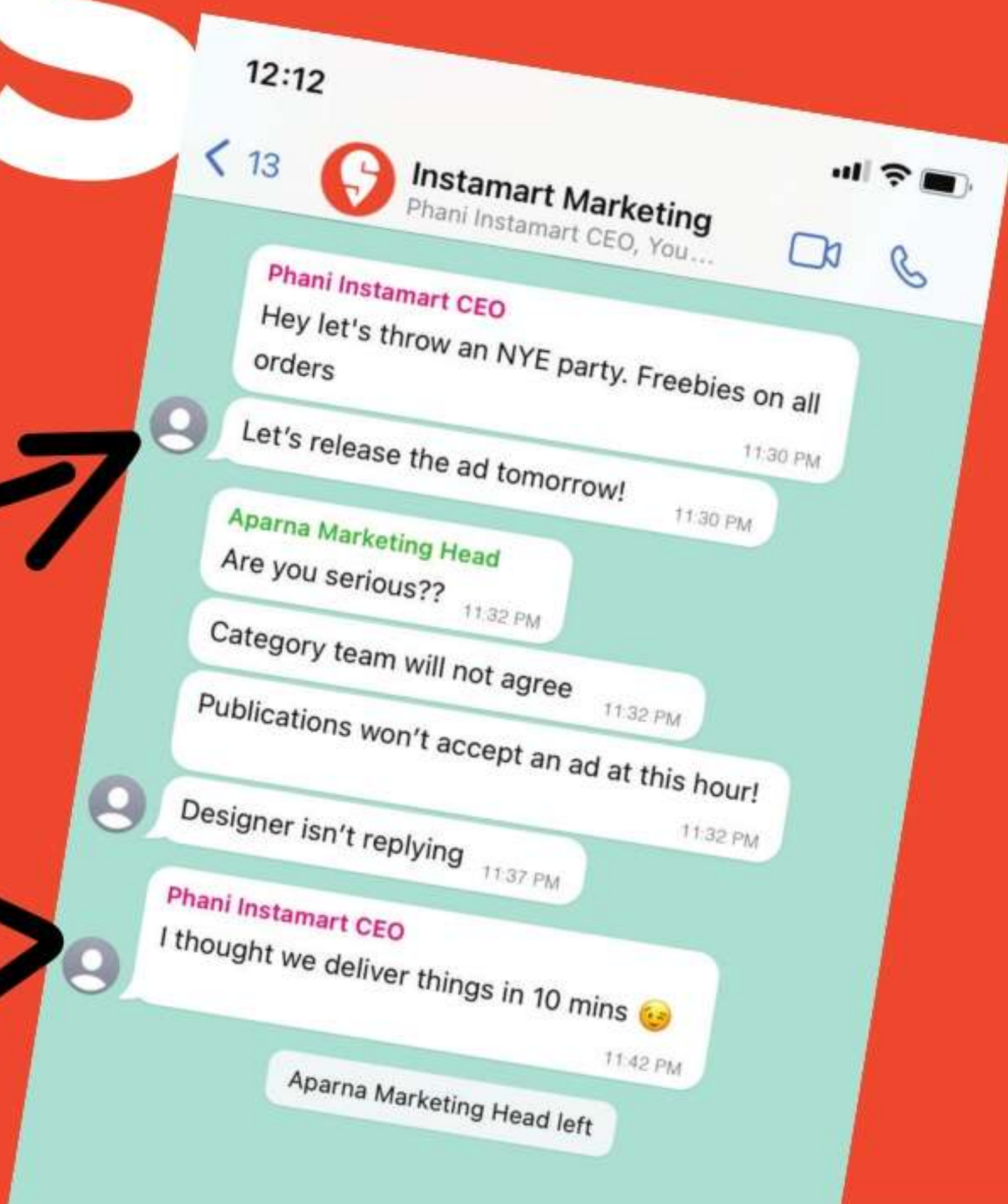
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'Indiscriminate' Ukrainian raid on Belgorod killed 14: Russia

Kyiv: Attack On Kharkiv Injured Eight Civilians

Russia said 14 people including two children had been killed and 108 injured in "indiscriminate" Ukrainian strikes allegedly including cluster bombs on the Russian provincial capital of Belgorod on Saturday, and vowed to retaliate. Two Vilkha missiles and Czech-made rockets were used in the attack, Russia said.

Belgorod lies about 30km from the border with Ukraine and has been repeatedly struck by what Moscow says is "indiscriminate shelling" by Kyiv's forces. Newspaper Kommersant cited a source close to the Russian Investigative Committee as saying missiles fired from a multiple rocket launcher in Ukraine's Kharkiv had hit a skating rink on the central Cathedral Square, a shopping centre and residential buildings.

A Russian attack damaged civilian infrastructure in central Kharkiv on Saturday, leav-



STRIKE, COUNTERSTRIKE: A videograb of a firefighter putting out flames following an attack on the Russian city of Belgorod on Saturday

ving eight injured, the regional governor Oleh Synehubov, said. "The occupiers carried out more than six strikes," Synehubov said in a post on the Telegram messaging app.

No official comment was available from Kyiv, but the Ukrainian news outlet RBC-Ukraine quoted unnamed sources as saying Ukrainian forces had directed fire at military targets in Belgorod in response to the massive Russian bombardment of Ukrainian cities the previous day.

Unverified footage showed debris strewn across the street and smoke billowing from burnt-out cars in the city's centre, while a large blast can be heard in a dashcam footage posted on social media.

AFP was not able to immediately verify the circumstances of the strike, one of the deadliest on Russian soil since Moscow launched hostilities against Ukraine in February 2022. The Kremlin said President Vladimir Putin had been briefed on the incident, while

UNSC to convene over Belgorod attack

The UN Security Council will convene late Saturday at Russia's request to discuss what Moscow claims was a deadly Ukrainian strike on the city of Belgorod, the Russian mission to the UN said. Three other council members confirmed the meeting, on condition of anonymity. "At 4 pm New York time a meeting of the UN Security Council requested by Russia will take place in connection with the strikes on Belgorod," Russia's mission said on social media. AFP

the Russian defence ministry warned the strike would "not go unpunished".

The attack came as rescuers in Ukraine continued to search through rubble Saturday after Russian strikes killed 39 people the day before, in one of the fiercest attacks since the early days of the conflict.

Russia's army said it had "carried out 50 group strikes and one massive strike" on military facilities in Ukraine over the past week, adding "all targets were hit". AFP, REUTERS

Trump's team rushes to file challenges on ballot decisions

Former President Donald Trump's advisers are preparing as soon as Tuesday to file challenges to decisions in Colorado and Maine to disqualify him from the Republican primary ballot because of the Jan 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol, according to a person familiar with the matter.



In Maine, the challenge to the secretary of state's decision to block Trump from the ballot will be filed in a state court. But the Colorado decision, which was made by that state's highest court, will be appealed to the US Supreme Court, which may face fresh pressure to weigh in on the issue.

On Thursday, Maine became the second state to keep Trump off the primary ballot over challenges stemming from Section 3 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution, which states that any officer of the United States who has taken an oath to uphold the Constitution cannot "have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof." "Every state is different," Maine's secretary of state, Shenna Bellows, told a local CBS affiliate Friday morning.

Trump has privately told some people that he believes the SC will overwhelmingly rule against the Colorado and Maine decisions. NYT

Ex-Trump fixer says AI created fake cases in court filing

Michael Cohen, Donald Trump's former fixer and lawyer, said in court papers unsealed on Friday that he mistakenly gave his attorney fake case citations generated by an artificial intelligence program that made their way into an official court filing.

Cohen, who is expected to be a star witness against Trump at one of the former president's criminal trials, said in a sworn declaration in federal court in Manhattan that he did not realize the citations generated by Google Bard were fictitious. Google Bard is a generative artificial intelligence chatbot developed by Alphabet Inc's Google. The case citations were included by an attorney for Cohen in a motion seeking an early end to his supervised release following Cohen's imprisonment for campaign finance violations.

US district judge Jesse Furman earlier this month said three court decisions cited in the motion did not exist. He directed Cohen's lawyer, David Schwartz, to demonstrate why he should not be sanctioned for citing non-existent cases. REUTERS

Israel hits camps in Gaza as Biden OKs new weapons sales

Deir Al-Balah (Gaza Strip): Israeli warplanes struck two urban refugee camps in central Gaza on Saturday, as the Biden administration approved a new emergency weapons sale to Israel despite persistent international ceasefire calls over mounting civilian deaths, hunger and mass displacement in the enclave.

The state department said on Friday that secretary of state Antony Blinken told Congress he approved a \$147.5 million sale for equipment, including fuses, charges and primers, that is needed for 155 mm shells Israel bought previously. It marked the second time this month that the Biden administration is bypassing Congress to approve an emergency weapons sale to Israel. The department cited the "urgency of Israel's defensive needs" as a reason for the approval.

Even a brief halt in fighting seems out of reach. A senior Hamas official said in Beirut on Saturday that the group has not budged from its position that a permanent ceasefire has to be the starting point for any further releases of Israeli and foreign hostages the group holds, which runs counter to a recent proposal by Egypt for a staged end to the war.

It's a demand Israel is bound to reject. Israel has said it will pursue its unprece-

McDonald's Malaysia sues over boycott calls

McDonald's Malaysia has sued a pro-Palestinian group for \$1.3 million over its calls to boycott companies allegedly supporting Israel. The fast-food chain said Friday the civil suit against BDS Malaysia was aimed at protecting "our rights in accordance with the law". McDonald's said it "does not support nor condone the current conflict". AFP

ted air and ground offensive until it has dismantled Hamas, a goal viewed by some as unattainable because of the militant group's deep roots in Palestinian society. The United States has shielded Israel diplomatically and has continued to supply weapons.

Israel argues ending the war now would mean victory for Hamas, a stance shared by the US, which at the same time urged Israel to do more to avoid harm to Palestinian civilians.

The health ministry in Gaza said on Saturday that the Palestinian death toll since the start of the war rose to 21,672, with a further 56,165 people wounded during the same period. Some of the latest deaths were reported as Israeli airstrikes targeted the urban refugee camps of Nu-seirat and Bureij overnight and into Saturday. AP

Indian-origin couple, who went bankrupt after edtech biz, daughter found dead at US home

New York: A wealthy Indian-origin couple and their teenage daughter were found dead in their \$5 million mansion in the US state of Massachusetts in an apparent domestic violence incident, according to media reports.

The bodies of Rakesh Kamal, 57, his wife, Teena, 54, and their 18-year-old daughter, Ariana, were found in their Dover mansion at about 7.30pm, Thursday, Norfolk District Attorney Michael Morrissey said. Dover is about 32km southwest of downtown Boston, the capital of Massachusetts.

Teena and her husband, who also went by Rick (in picture), had previously run a now-defunct education sy-

stems company called EduNova. The district attorney, who described the "terrible tragedy" as a "domestic violence situation," said a gun was found near the husband's body.

He declined to say whether all three family members were shot dead — and by whom, the New York Post reported. Morrissey said he was waiting for the medical examiner's ruling, which was expected soon, before deciding whether to refer to the incident as a murder-suicide.

The couple appeared to have faced financial problems in recent years, records show. The family's sprawling mansion — estimated to be worth \$5.45 million — went into fore-

closure a year ago and was sold to the Massachusetts-based Wilsondale Associates LLC for \$3 million, according to The Post. The Kamals had purchased the 19,000-square-foot estate — which boasts 11 bedrooms — for \$4 million in 2019, according to the records.

Their company was launched in 2016 but was dissolved in Dec 2021. Teena was listed on EduNova's website as the chief operating officer of the company, describing her as an alum of Harvard University and Delhi University.

According to his biography on the EduNova website, Kamal was an alumnus of Boston University and the MIT Sloan School of Management, as well as Stanford University. Before working at

EduNova, he "held many executive positions in the education consulting field," the biography added. EduNova marketed a "student success system" designed to improve the grades of students in middle school, high school, and college," said The Boston Globe.

Teena filed for Chapter 13 bankruptcy in September 2022 — listing between \$1 million and \$10 million in liabilities, filings show. The case, however, was dismissed two months later due to insufficient documentation.

The couple's daughter was a student at Middlebury College, a \$64,800-a-year private liberal arts school in Vermont, where she was studying neuroscience, according to her LinkedIn. PTI



Red Sea attacks translate into double wages for Danish seafarers

The shipping industry in Denmark, home to some of the world's largest firms, agreed to double wages for crew sailing through the Red Sea to compensate for the danger posed by the recent attacks.

The hazard pay kicks in for the time spent in two defined high-risk areas in the region, according to a deal presented on Friday by employer group Danish Shipping and the nation's three largest labour unions for seafarers.

Many transport companies are avoiding the Red Sea where Yemen-based Houthis have attacked ships in support for Hamas in the conflict with Israel. Ships without direct links to Israel have also been targeted.

Data this week showed that half of the container-ship fleet that regularly transits the Red Sea and Suez Canal is avoiding the route. Diverting around Africa can take as much as 25% longer than using the Suez Canal shortcut between Asia and Europe. BLOOMBERG

Create 'diplomatic iron army', Xi tells Chinese envoys

Beijing: Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday urged Chinese ambassadors to forge a "diplomatic iron army" loyal to the Communist Party, reviving the abrasive "Wolf Warrior" rhetoric propagated by some diplomats as a sign of China's increasingly assertive foreign policy. "Dare to become defenders of the national interest. It is necessary to... safeguard the interests of national sovereignty, security and development with a posture of readiness and a firm will to defy strong powers," Xi told overseas envoys gathered in Beijing. REUTERS

Drones fly 'drop bombs', seek the sky from Myanmar's junta

'Ops Creations Of Gen Z Fighters'

A squad of Myanmar democracy fighters works quickly to ready drones for an attack on a nearby military base, the latest target in a wave of aerial assaults that has helped turn the war against the junta. The team stood back as one contraption named "Bomber VIII" carrying a new 6kg explosive soared over a line of trees.

"The military position is four kilometres away from us," said Soe Thuya Zaw, the drone unit's leader, as he punched coordinates into a map on his phone. "It is within our reach." Minutes later the drones had reached the position and at the push of a button released their "drop bombs" over the target. The team counted two blasts. One had failed to detonate, but all three drones returned safely.

Opponents of Myanmar's junta use such attacks to challenge the military's dominance of the skies through its Russian and Chinese-built jets and helicopters. "While



A member of the Mandalay People's Defense Forces preparing to release a drone in Shan State

military pilots are flying fighter jets themselves and attacking us, we are also trying to conquer the sky of the battlefield," said Soe Thuya Zaw of the "Mandalay People's Defence Force". He said his group's drone operations were entirely "the creations of our generation Z".

Myanmar's junta chief Min Aung Hlaing has admitted the drone barrages have forced the military to retreat from its positions. An alliance of ethnic minority armed groups had used 25,000 "drop bombs" in their recent offensive, he said in November.

Ahead of the launch, Soe Thuya Zaw admitted the range of their drones is limited, making every attack risky. "We are in the red zone and the military can hit us any time." But in recent weeks waves of "drop bomb" attacks across Myanmar have displaced junta troops from positions, hit domestic airports and killed a brigadier-general near the China border.

At one workshop hidden in the hills of northern Shan state diesel generators splutter alongside power tools, coils of wire and stacks of plastic piping. Gunpowder cooks in a pan over a log fire. It will later be poured into plastic shells that will be filled in with deadly shrapnel.

The Mandalay PDF drone unit was started by two engineering students and now has more than 50 members, said Soe Thuya Zaw. The group uses 3D printers to produce prototype "drop bomb" shells which are filled with non-explosive materials and launched from drones in test missions. Contact fuses — which detonate the charge on impact — are checked by being dropped from trees. Women make up around a third of the Mandalay drone unit. AFP

Pakistan poll body rejects Imran Khan's nomination

Karachi: Pakistan's election body has rejected former Prime Minister Imran Khan's nomination to contest the 2024 national elections in two constituencies, officials and his party's media team said on Saturday.

The 71-year-old former cricket star has been embroiled in a tangle of political and legal battles since he was ousted as prime minister in April 2022. He has not been seen in public since he was jailed for three years in August for unlawfully selling state gifts while in office from 2018 to 2022.



TOLD YOU SO: Imran Khan

Khan has been disqualified from contesting the national elections scheduled for Feb. 8 because of the corruption conviction, but he nevertheless filed nomination papers for the elections on Friday, his media team said.

In a list of rejected candida-

tes from Lahore, the Election Commission of Pakistan said Khan's nomination was rejected because he was not a registered voter of the constituency and he is "convicted by the court of law and has been disqualified". His media team said the commission had also rejected his nomination to contest the elections from his hometown, Mianwali.

Khan, who is widely seen as the country's most popular leader, says he is being targeted by the powerful military, which wants to keep him out of the polls. The military denies this. PTI

FLOODING DISRUPTS LONDON TUBE SERVICE



Passengers are stuck at the St Pancras station in London on Saturday, after Eurostar cancelled all of the day's services — a total of 41 trains — after the flooding (top right) of some of the underground rail tunnels it operates. It was not immediately clear what had caused the flooding in the railway tunnels under the River Thames near Ebbsfleet, east of London. Parts of England have faced heavy rain in recent days and an official "yellow warning" for strong and gusty winds is in place in southern England. Eurostar runs services from London to Paris, Brussels and Amsterdam via Ashford, midway between London and the southern English coast. The disruption comes after French unions ended a wildcat strike that had stranded holidaymakers and held up freight just days before Christmas. AFP & REUTERS

University chancellor posts porn with wife online, fired

The chancellor of a state university in Wisconsin was fired this week after posting pornographic videos with his wife online.

The University of Wisconsin Board unanimously decided to dismiss the chancellor, Joe Gow, who had led the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse since 2007. Carmen Wilson, Gow's wife, was also removed from her unpaid position as associate to the chancellor.

Gow and Wilson said Thursday they believe they were fired over the videos, which included sex scenes together and with others under the username Sexy Happy Couple. Both said they felt it was wrong for the university to punish them over the videos.



IN HOT WATER: Joe Gow (right) and Carmen Wilson in 2018

arguing that doing so infringes on their free speech rights. Gow, 63, said he and his wife, 56, have made videos together for years but had decided recently to make them publicly available on porn sites. They said they never mentioned the university or their jobs in the videos.

Jay Rothman, the president of the University of Wisconsin System, said Gow had caused

the university "significant reputational harm." He said the current plan was for Gow, who is also a tenured professor of communication, to return to his faculty role following a paid administrative leave. A law firm will investigate the matter.

In 2004, the US Supreme Court unanimously decided a case about a police officer who had been fired for selling a pornographic video of himself. In the case, the court ruled that the officer's First Amendment right had not been violated. The court said that while public employees have a right to speak on matters of public concern, a pornographic video did not fall into that category. NYT

AROUND THE WORLD



ADIEU: A believer of the Afro-Brazilian religions pays tribute to Yemanjá, goddess of the sea, during a traditional New Year's Eve celebration in Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Friday

Cargo ship with lithium ion batteries to continue voyage despite a fire

A cargo vessel carrying lithium-ion batteries has been ordered to continue to Alaska after a fire was reported in its cargo hold. The US Coast Guard said Friday the fire is contained but ongoing. The 125-metre cargo ship Genius Star XI was directed to continue to the port at Dutch Harbor, Alaska. A Coast Guard airplane and the Coast Guard ship Alex Haley were sent to assist. The ship was located about 362km southwest of Dutch Harbor when they reported the fire early Thursday morning, the guard said in a release. The vessel is owned by Wisdom Marine Group of Taipei, Taiwan. It was headed to San Diego with the batteries from Vietnam, an email said.

More than 100 anglers rescued from an ice chunk: More than 100 people stranded while fishing on an ice chunk that broke free on a Minnesota river were rescued Friday, authorities said. The anglers were on an ice floe in the southeastern area of Upper Red Lake in Beltrami County — about 322km northwest of Minneapolis — when it broke loose from the shoreline. An emergency call shortly before 5pm said the people were stranded with more than 9 metres separating them from shore. Nobody had fallen through the ice.

British Sikh medic knighted: Dr Amritpal Singh Hungin, Emeritus Professor of General Practice at Newcastle University, has been knighted by King Charles III in the 2024 New Year Honours list, which includes honours for members of the England women's football squad and charity workers. He was the founding Dean of Medicine at Durham University and a former president of the British Medical Association.

US spends most money for endangered species on a few creatures

Billings (Montana): Since passage of the Endangered Species Act 50 years ago, more than 1,700 plants, mammals, fish, insects and other species in the US have been listed as threatened or endangered with extinction. Yet federal government data reveals striking disparities in how much money is allocated to save various biological kingdoms.

Of the roughly \$1.2 billion a year spent on endangered and threatened species, about half goes toward recovery of just two types of fish: salmon and steelhead trout along the West Coast. Tens of millions of dollars go to other widely known animals including manatees,



INEQUITY? About half of the fund goes toward recovery of just two types of fish: salmon (in pic) and steelhead trout

right whales, grizzly bears and spotted owls. But the large sums directed toward a handful of species means others have gone neglected, in some cases for decades, as they teeter on potential extinction.

At the bottom of the spending list is the tiny Virginia fringed mountain snail, which had \$100 spent on its behalf in 2020, according to the most recent data available. The underground-dwelling snail has been seen only once in the past 35 years, according to government records, yet it remains a

step ahead of more than 200 imperiled plants, animals, fish and other creatures that had nothing spent on their behalf.

With climate change increasing threats to organisms around the planet and adding to the number that qualify for protection under the Endangered Species Act, officials are struggling in many cases to execute recovery actions required under the law. Scientists even argue for spending less on costly efforts that may not work and putting the money toward species with less ex-

pensive recovery plans. "For a tiny fraction of the budget going to spotted owls, we could save whalespecies of cacti that are less charismatic but have an order of magnitude smaller budget," said Leah Gerber, a conservation professor at Arizona State University.

An Associated Press analysis of 2020 data found fish got 67% of the spending, the majority for several dozen salmon and steelhead populations in California, Oregon and Washington. Mammals were a distant second with 7% of spend-

ing and birds had about 5%. Insects received just 0.5% of the money and plants about 2%. Not included in those percentages is money divided among multiple species.

Species drawing no spending included stoneflies threatened by climate change in Montana's Glacier National Park, the California tiger salamander that has lost ground to development and flowering plants such as the scrub lupine around Orlando, Florida, where native habitat has been converted for theme parks. AP



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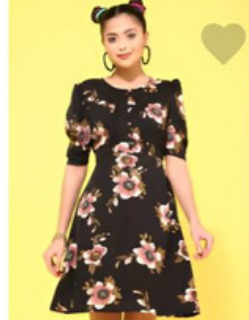
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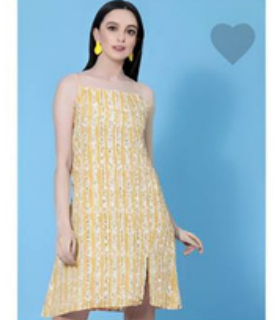
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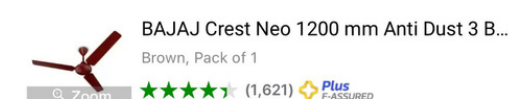
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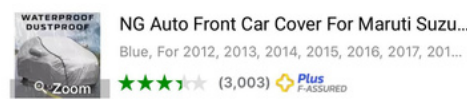


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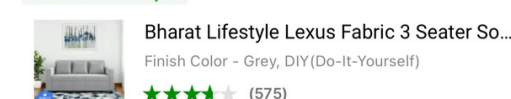
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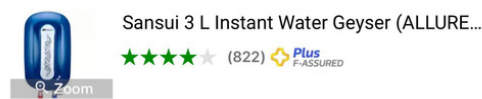


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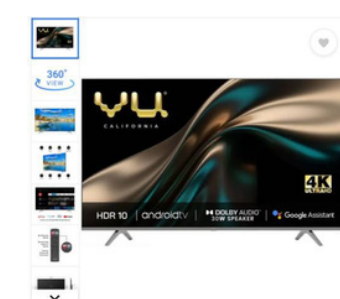


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